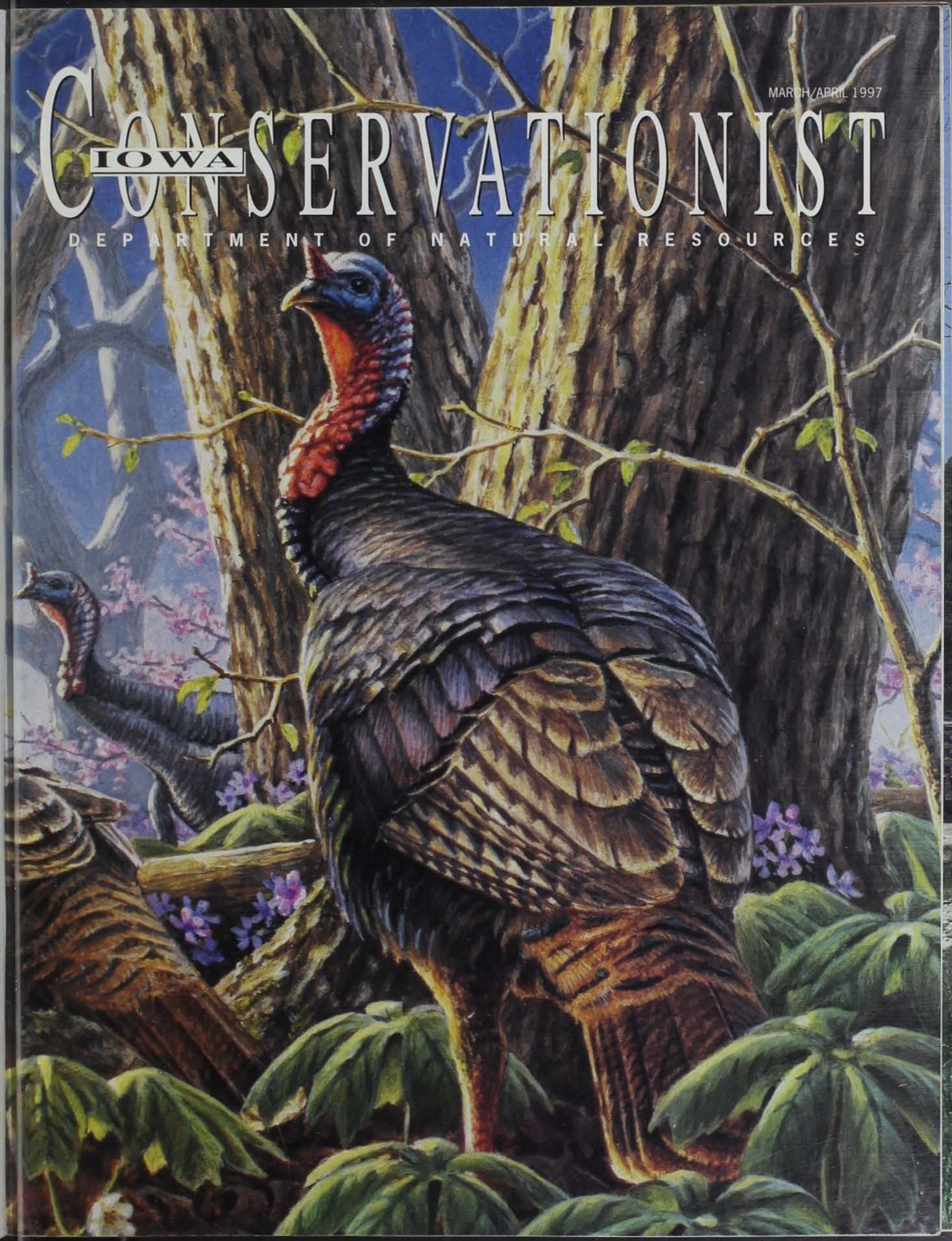
IOWA
CONSERVATIONIST
MARCH/APRIL 1997
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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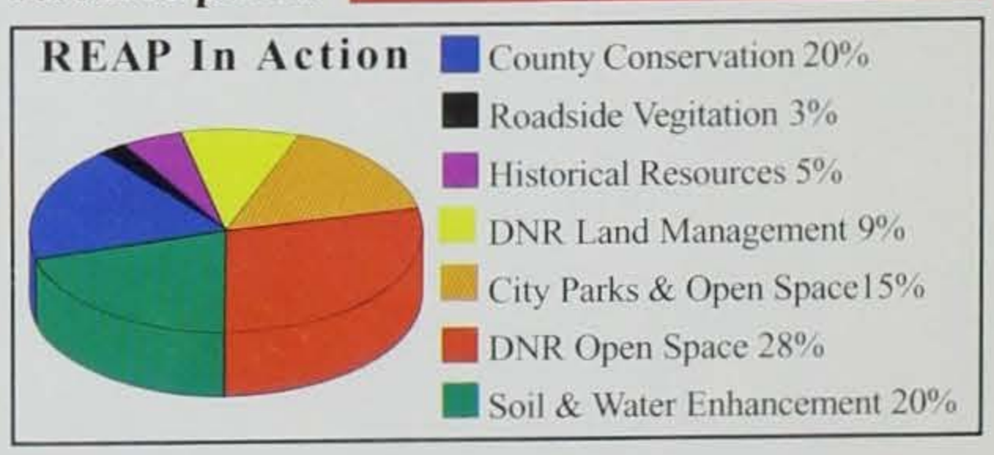

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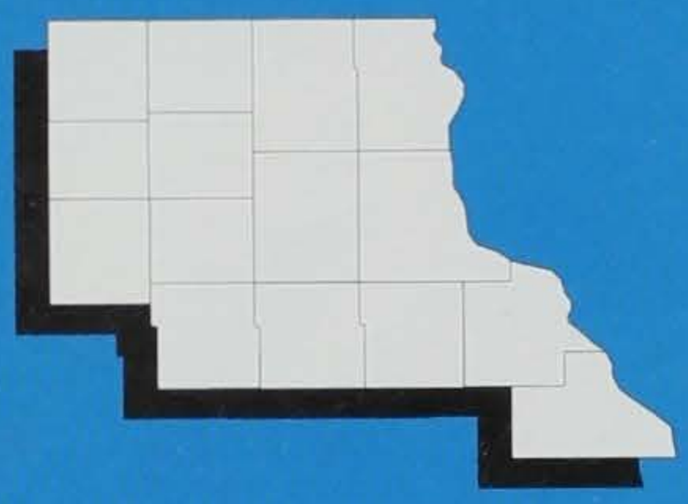
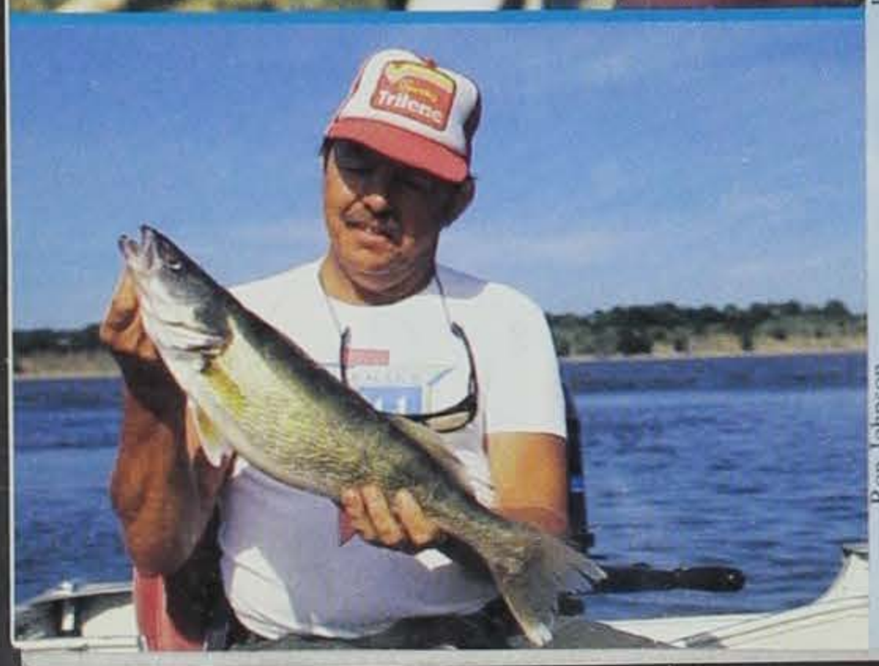


NORTHEAST

by Dave Moeller

DNR



Ron Johnson

Northeast Iowans are blessed with a tremendous diversity of quality fishing waters, ranging from the step-across trout streams to the two-miles-across Mississippi River, and from small ponds and lakes to the large Mississippi backwaters. This diversity of waters produces a real diversity of quality sport fish to pursue. Listed in the following table are areas *where* we expect angling for the major species to be very good this year. For most of us, the best time to go fishing is any time we can; however, if we can coincide our efforts with certain key periods and conditions, our success in catching a particular species will be greater. Let's also take a look at *when* we should concentrate our efforts on the major species.

For ***walleye***, the prespawn period from just after ice-out to when the water temperature reaches about 48°F is an excellent time to fish below the navigation dams on the Mississippi River and the low-head dams on the interior rivers. Late spring and summer often finds them on the wing dams and along riprap areas of the Mississippi when the river flow is not too strong. Late fall and winter on the Big River again finds the walleye in the dam tailwater areas and on the interior rivers in the deepest pools.

As soon as the ice goes out, ***catfish*** go on a feeding binge on fish that have died over the winter. Fishing with cut-bait or dead minnows, at this time, is often excellent. Catfishing is frequently excellent on a rising river. The summer and early fall period of low and stable river flows is also a favored time for cats.

The weeks just before and after the spawn (around 75°F) are the best for ***bluegills***. The males are aggressive in guarding their nests and will attack small baits and lures entering their space. Mid-summer months are also productive, but in the deeper water areas with structure. During the lowest flow conditions in summer, the Mississippi River wingdams frequently produce lots of big "gills." The first few weeks after ice-up is another peak time for some of the biggest bluegills of the year.

By far, the most productive period for ***largemouth bass*** is the prespawn when the water temperatures range from 55 to 62°F and the fish are actively feeding in shallow water. The fall months, from mid-September to when the water cools to about 50°F are also good. The bass are shallow and stocking up on forage for the winter months.

The ***trout*** streams are generally good throughout the April through November stocking season. The fall months are particularly good as angling pressure and streamside disturbance are reduced. An excellent time to fish the stream-reared trout populations (the put-and-grow streams and special regulation streams) is just after a moderate rain when the normally crystal clear water has a slight color tinge. During this brief period, the anglers has a distinct advantage.

Like their cousin the bluegill, male ***crappie*** become very aggressive during the prespawn and spawning period (58 to 68°F), normally in May. The cooler fall

continued on page 6

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
BLUEGILL	
Casey, *Tama*	Most are from 6 to 8 inches.
Delhi, *Delaware*	Fish up to 8 inches. Concentrate on early spring and late fall to avoid heavy boating traffic.
Mississippi River, Pools 9 through 15	Expect an increase of more and bigger bluegills throughout the range. As vegetation has made a comeback in recent years, so has the angling success and harvest of bluegills increased.
Volga, *Fayette*	Up to 8 inches and plentiful in old creek channels and along the dam. Handicapped-accessible floating fishing dock with nearby habitat structures.
CHANNEL CATFISH	
Cedar River, *Bremer, Black Hawk, Chickasaw, and Floyd*	Abundant numbers from Charles City down stream and occasional flathead below Waterloo.
George Wyth Lake, *Black Hawk*	High number of 1- to 3-pounders. Handicapped-accessible fishing pier available.
Delhi, *Delaware*	Good population of all sizes, avoid mid-summer due to high recreational boat traffic.
Meyer, *Winneshiek*	Cage program has been going for several years and has built up good numbers.
Maquoketa River, *Delaware, Jones and Jackson*	Good populations throughout the entire area.
Mississippi River, Pools 9 through 15	Outstanding populations of all sizes await anglers. Expect excellent fishing beginning with drift fishing adjacent to rock riprap during spawning run in June and July extending through stink bait fishing during the summer months. Numerous fish in the 5- to 8-pound size group. No bag or possession limit on the Mississippi River!
Shell Rock River, *Butler*	Good numbers throughout the entire county.
Turkey River, *Clayton*	Best population from Elkader to Osterdock. Hit the deep water just below the riffles, around snags and along rocky banks.
Upper Iowa River, *Allamakee*	Try fishing from canoe from Lower Dam northeast of Decorah to Highway 76 north of Waukon. Medium-sized fish, but lots of them.
Volga, *Fayette*	Many years of fingerling stockings have established an excellent population. Some very large cats are occasionally taken. Handicapped-accessible fishing pier.
Wapsipinicon River, *Buchanan*	Concentrated your effort downstream from Independence.
CRAPPIE	
Casey, *Tama*	Fish for 8- to 10-inch fish around abundant deep water structure.
George Wyth, *Black Hawk*	8- to 10-inchers present.
Mississippi River, Pools 9 through 15	Netting surveys continue to indicated black crappie populations are strong and increasing. Lots of fish 8 to 9 inches, with quite a few from 10 to 15.
Sweet Marsh Segment B (Marten's Lake), *Bremer*	Very abundant 8- to 11-inch fish.
FRESHWATER DRUM	
Mississippi River, Pools 9 through 15	These hard-fighting, bottom-feeders are very abundant in the Big River and are excellent on the dinner table. Fish for them along the main channel borders and in the dam tailwaters using natural bait such as nightcrawlers and crayfish tails.
LARGEMOUTH BASS	
Casey, *Tama*	Excellent population, numerous 5+-pound bass.
Mississippi River, Pools 9 through 15	The Mississippi still supports the largest bass population in the state, due in part to the 14-inch length limit and increasing catch-and-release angling. Good numbers, but most are less than 4 pounds.
South Prairie, *Black Hawk*	New 22-acre lake just south of Cedar Falls. Very abundant 12- to 14-inchers present, 18-inch minimum size limit.

continued from page 4

months can also be very good. Again, like the bluegill, the early ice fishing period is an excellent time for crappie as well.

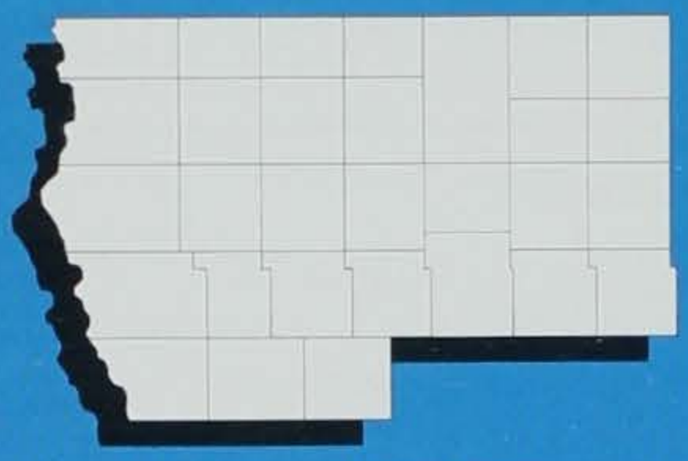
The hot months of July and August are often the best for ***northern pike***. Big bobber fishing with a live chub in the deeper backwater areas is very effective. During these hot months, also seek out areas where cooler spring flows or a trout stream enters larger, pike-holding rivers. These cooler waters area a true magnet for northerns at this time.

When the streams are clear enough, the prespawn period from 50 to 60°F is an excellent time for ***smallmouth bass***. The clear and stable water conditions of fall also results in good smallmouth angling, often with good action continuing right into November.

Having been armed with the location of the best fishin' holes and the best times to pursue different species, the only thing left is the fun part -- the doing. I sincerely hope that your angling enjoyment in 1997 is surpassed only by the beauty of northeast Iowa.

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
Sweet Marsh Segment B, (Marten's Lake), *Bremer*	Heavy vegetation makes fishing difficult in the summer. Bass up to 5 pounds are quite abundant.
Volga, *Fayette*	Good population of medium size bass with some over 15-inch length limit. Try along the riprap or near deeper snags along the west shore.
NORTHERN PIKE	
Cedar River, *Black Hawk and Bremer*	Concentrate on areas with backwater habitats.
Mississippi River, Pools 9 through 14	Most fish from 5 to 8 pounds with some up to 15. Fish large, live bait fish in the backwaters in summer and fall, and near the mouths of cold-water tributary streams during the hottest summer periods.
Sweet Marsh Segment B (Marten's Lake), *Bremer*	Moderate numbers of 5- to 10-pound fish.
Wapsipinicon River, *Buchanan, Black Hawk and Bremer*	17-pounder caught in 1996. Best fishing from Independence upstream. Fish the abundant deadfalls.
SMALLMOUTH BASS	
Cedar River, *Bremer and Black Hawk*	Best habitat and bass numbers are down stream from Waverly and Waterloo.
Cedar River, *Mitchell*	Excellent habitat above and below the Mitchell Impoundment. Catch-and-release area from Otranto to St. Ansgar.
Maquoketa River, *Delaware*	Catch-and-release area below the Lake Delhi dam has excellent numbers of large smallies -- some more than 20 inches!
Maquoketa River, *Jones and Jackson*	Below Monticello and Canton are the best areas.
Mississippi River, Pools 9 through 15	This species is responding to increases in riverine habitats and populations are on the increase. Fish rock structure in the current with either live or artificial baits.
Shell Rock River, *Butler*	Excellent habitat between Greene and Shell Rock. High numbers of fish over the 12-inch length limit.
Shell Rock River, *Floyd*	Best accessed from canoe or by wading. Medium size fish.
Turkey River, *Clayton*	Excellent habitat from above Eldorado down to Big Spring, and from Elkader to Garber.
Upper Iowa River, *Allamakee, Howard and Winneshiek*	Very scenic and popular canoeing stream. Best fishing early above Kendallville, later below Decorah. New catch-and-release area from Decorah to Upper Dam, fair numbers of 12- to 18-inchers.

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
Volga River, *Fayette*	Smaller, but scenic, stream -- best from Fayette to Mederville.
Wapsipinicon River, *Buchanan*	Independence to Quasqueton has the best habitat.
TROUT	
Bloody Run, *Clayton*	Large stream stocked with browns and rainbows from April through October. Special brown trout segment on lower end (above Bloody Run Park) with a 14-inch minimum length limit and artificial-lure-only restriction.
Ensign Hollow, *Clayton*	Catch-and-release stream. Brown trout numbers and size of fish continue to increase.
Fountain Springs, *Delaware*	Stocked with catchable rainbows and some brown trout. Reproduction of wild brown trout has occurred the last 3 years.
French Creek, *Allamakee*	Wild brown trout catch-and-release area. Catchable size rainbows stocked in Lower French may be kept. All angling restricted to artificial lure only.
Little Turkey River, *Delaware*	Bank hides installed in 1995 and 1996 has greatly increased trout habitat. Stocked with catchable brown trout and fingerling brown and brook trout.
Pine Creek, *Allamakee and Winneshiek*	Walk-in access to very scenic stream. Stocked with browns twice monthly from April through November.
Richmond Springs, *Delaware*	Located in Backbone State Park. Major habitat renovation and handicapped-accessible area completed in 1996. Stocked with catchable rainbows plus has a healthy wild brown trout population.
Sny Magill/North Cedar, *Clayton*	Excellent drive-up or walk-in access on Sny Magill which is stocked from April through November with brown and rainbow trout. North Cedar is walk-in access and is stocked with browns once per month in the lower portion and with fingerling brooks once annually in the upper end. One area on Sny Magill is developed for handicap access.
South Pine, *Winneshiek*	Very strong numbers of naturally reproducing, vividly colored brook trout. Catch-and-release and artificial lure only. Long (3/4-mile) walk-in access.
Spring Branch, *Delaware*	Habitat improvement projects continued in 1996. 14-inch size limit on brown, rainbow and brook trout. Excellent insect hatches.
Trout Run, *Winneshiek*	Handicap parking and stream access. Stocked twice weekly with browns and rainbows from April through October.
WALLEYE	
Cedar River, *Bremer, Black Hawk, Chickasaw, and Floyd*	Fingerling stockings have resulted in good populations. Deep holes can hold fish year round. Good success in spring below dams.
Mississippi River, Pools 9 through 15	1996 walleye angling was very good with lots of fish just under the 15-inch length limit. Most of those 13- to 14-inch fish will be legal size in 1997 and walleye harvest is expected to be excellent. Key in on tailwaters in the March and April pre-spawn period and again in late fall. Work the wingdams in post-spawn and summer/early fall periods.
Wapsipinicon River, *Buchanan*	Downstream from Independence is the best bet. This stretch consistently produces 10+ -pound walleyes.



NORTHWEST

by Tom Gengerke

Knowledge, opportunity and time -- some are limiting, others are not! The natural lakes, rich prairie streams and border rivers of northwestern and north-central Iowa offer excellent and diverse opportunities for all anglers. From the Big Sioux River Days in Hawarden to Octoberfest at Clear Lake, from the Lake View Summer Water Carnival to the Great Walleye Weekend at Spirit Lake -- the opportunities are out there waiting for you.

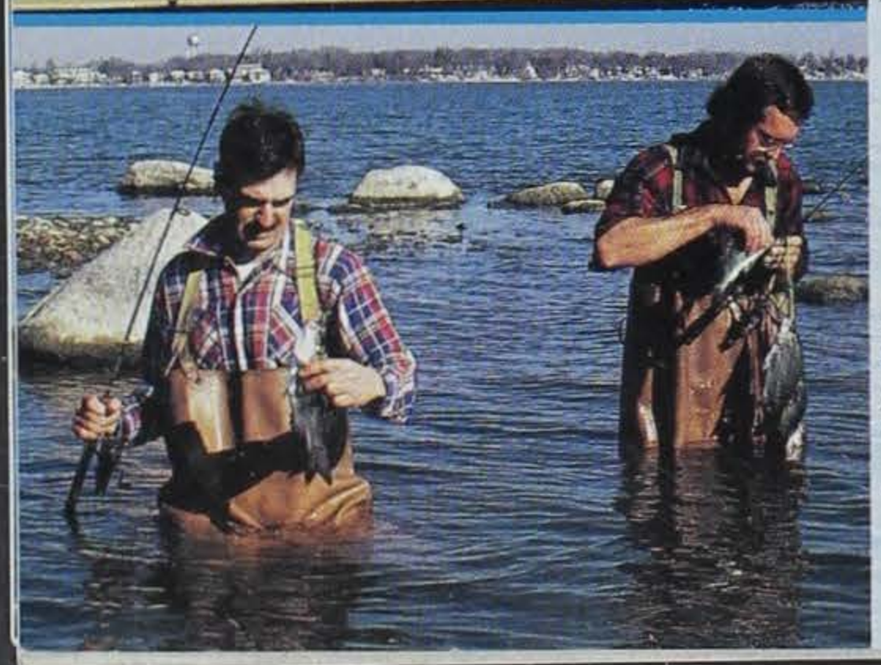
Walleyes, ***smallmouth bass***, ***pike*** and ***yellow perch*** receive lots of attention, as well they should, but I would encourage you to also think of alternative species such as ***channel catfish***. Lakes such as Storm, Black Hawk, Clear, Pahoja and Dog Creek have lots of channel catfish available and I guarantee these lakes hold big fish. June, July and August are prime months to fish this species. Nightcrawlers, leeches, prepared baits, crayfish and livers are preferred baits. Try shad entrails right after ice out or drift skinned chubs in the summer for added excitement. Rivers, such as the Iowa, Des Moines, Boone, Big Sioux and Little Sioux hold plenty of fish, and are the traditional destinations of ardent catfish anglers, plus, they're close to home.

Bluegills are another species worthy of your attention. Most of the fish are 6 to 8 inches and the opportunity for 9- to 10-inch fish is not unreasonable. Blue Lake, Little Wall, Crystal, Dog Creek, Mill Creek and West Okoboji all have lots of gills. Remember those 10-inch fish -- some are caught every year at Yellow Smoke. Small hocks, waxworms, a piece of crawler or a 1/16-ounce (or smaller) dark jig are time-tested baits.

Give these species a try -- take a kid fishing -- relax and enjoy the many outdoor recreational opportunities available to you in northwestern and north-central Iowa.

Lowell Washburn

Lowell Washburn



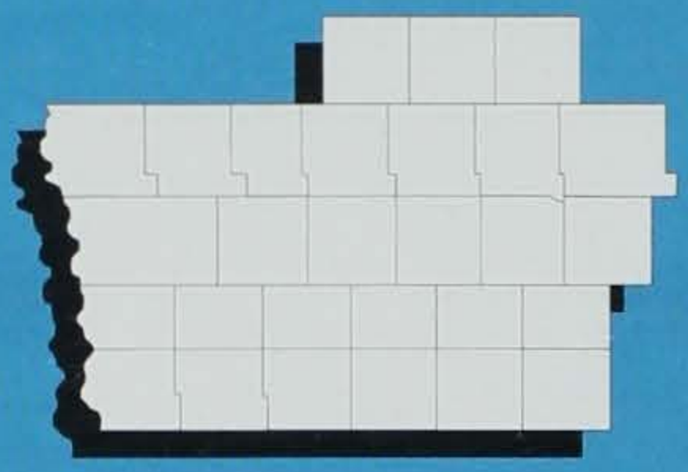
Lowell Washburn

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
WALLEYE	
Clear, *Cerro Gordo*	Outstanding fishing during 1996, with a record catch. Most fish harvested were 14 to 18 inches. Excellent numbers of sub-legal size walleye will recruit into the fishery. Look for another good year in 1997.
Spirit, *Dickinson*	The strong 1991 walleye year-class will still produce angling during 1997 (18+-inch fish). Large numbers of sub-legal size walleye (1994 year class) will also recruit to the fishery
East Okoboji, *Dickinson*	This lake will be a good producer of 14- to 17-inch walleyes in 1997. The lower part (from Stoney Point south) of the lake is the producer for boat anglers, while the highway bridges and the trestle areas are typically used by shore anglers.
Silver, *Dickinson*	During 1997, 10- to 15-inch and larger fish should comprise the bulk of the fish creeled by the Silver Lake angler. Continued good growth of the 1995 year-class should produce additional angler -acceptable fish by fall.
Lost Island, *Palo Alto*	Anglers reported good fishing during 1996 and this should continue for 1997. The bulk of the catch comes from the 1992 year-class. Shoreline wading is the most consistent producer at this lake.

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
YELLOW PERCH	
Five Island, *Palo Alto*	Fish from 15 to 19 inches will dominate the 1997 creel. Anglers will notice the large 1995 year-class. Small fish early in the season, coupled with good growth during the summer, will provide an upswing in the fall fishery.
Storm, *Buena Vista*	Walleye harvest in 1996 was low due to turbid water conditions in May and June. 1997 should be an excellent year. Lots of fish just under the 15-inch length limit. Plenty of large walleye in the population.
Black Hawk, *Sac*	Still lots of nice walleye in Black Hawk Lake, with some fish in the 7- to 9-pound range. Trolling crankbaits in May and June account for most walleye.
Iowa River, *Hardin*	Strong year-class of 1- to 1-1/2-pounders between Steamboat Rock and Union.
West Fork Des Moines River, *Humboldt*	Fish below low-head dams and riffles in the spring, and deep wintering holes in the fall.
West Fork Des Moines River, *Emmet*	A good walleye population in this part of the river. Excellent opportunities exist at the riffles in the Estherville area and the deep hole refuges scattered throughout this river reach.
Little Sioux River, *Clay*	This river has been a consistent producer the past several years. Water level conditions must be favorable.
YELLOW PERCH	
Cornelia, *Wright*	Dense population of 7- to 8-inch fish.
Rice, *Winnebago*	Good winter fishery. Fair number of "jumbo size" and excellent numbers of small perch.
Spirit, *Dickinson*	Perch fishing should improve during 1997, with good numbers of 3- and 4-year-olds recruited into the catchable population.
West Okoboji, *Dickinson*	Look for improved size and good numbers of perch caught in 1997 due to recruitment of 4- and 5-year-old fish.
Little Swan, *Dickinson*	This lake could be the 1997 "sleeper lake" with the potential of producing good catches of 10-inch fish.
High, *Emmet*	Excellent numbers of 8- to 10-inch fish will be available by the fall of 1997.
Dog Creek, *O'Brien*	Large number of 8- to 10-inch fish were harvested from Dog Creek Lake during 1996. Should continue during the 1997 season. Expected growth during the summer should produce a catch comprised largely of 10-inch fish during the fall and winter of 1997.
BULLHEAD	
Black Hawk, *Sac*	Extra ordinary population of 9- to 11-inch bullheads. Early spring and late summer fishing was excellent in 1996. Try the inlet area and north shore in early spring.
Cornelia, *Wright*	High density of 1/2-pound bullheads should provide excellent fishing. Plenty of shoreline access on the north shore.
Spirit, *Dickinson*	In 1997, improved size will please the lakes bullhead angler. Remember the North Grade for those early catches of "heads."
Silver, *Dickinson*	Large catches and quality angling of 11-inch fish await the Silver Lake angler in 1997.
Center, *Dickinson*	An excellent population of under-used adult fish (average size 11 inches) should produce excellent angling during the 1997 season.
High, *Emmet*	The under-exploited bullhead population of High Lake has the potential to provide anglers quality angling and large catches of 9-inch fish during 1997.
Ingham, *Emmet*	Bullhead anglers will harvest numerous fish with 8-1/2-inchers dominating the catch.
Lost Island, *Palo Alto*	Bullhead anglers will continue to see an upswing in their fishery as numerous harvestable-sized fish approximately 8-1/2 inches comprise the catch.
Dog Creek, *O'Brien*	The 1996 assessment survey indicates good numbers of large (11-inches) bullheads available for the angler.
CHANNEL CATFISH	
Storm, *Buena Vista*	In 1996, more than 9,000 channel catfish were harvested and 1997 should be another banner year. June, July and August are the months for "slick skins." Nightcrawlers, leeches, stink bait, crayfish and liver are the top producing baits in Storm Lake.

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
Black Hawk, *Sac*	Although catfish harvest was below 3,000 fish in 1996, surveys show a good population of all sizes still present in Black Hawk Lake. Look for this lake to come on in 1997. The best bait for catfish in Black Hawk Lake is shad entrails, stink bait and liver. Drifting skinned chubs in the summer months is a killer technique.
Clear, *Cerro Gordo*	1- to 2-pound fish common, with an occasional fish reaching 10 pounds.
Iowa River, *Hardin*	1996 survey showed good numbers of 1- to 3-pound cats below Alden to the county line.
Des Moines River, *Kossuth and Humboldt*	Low water concentrated fish in 1996. If water levels remain stable or low, look for another good year in 1997.
Boone River, *Hamilton*	1996 survey below Webster City revealed 3/4- to 1-1/2-pound fish are plentiful. Plus a few 20- to 30-pound flatheads as a bonus.
Big Sioux River, Lyon, *Sioux and Plymouth*	Large numbers of 1/2- to 2-pound fish are abundant and if river conditions are good, some excellent catfishing will result in 1997.
Little Sioux River, *Dickinson and Clay*	Traditionally good, especially for the 1- to 3-pound fish. 1997 should be no exception, especially if water conditions are good.
West Fork Des Moines River, *Emmet and Palo Alto*	Numbers are excellent and should provide some excellent angling in 1997. There is an excellent population of small (3/4- to 1-1/2-pound) cats in this stream.
Pahoja, *Lyon*	Anglers enjoyed an excellent 1996 catfish season that should carry over and provide good fishing during the 1997 season.
Dog Creek, *O'Brien*	The cage catfish program will continue to provide dividends in the form of large fish.
East Okoboji, *Dickinson*	This lake has produced rather sporadically in the last three years. However, recent surveys indicate a good population of 3- to 5-pound fish available. 1997 should be good for catfish anglers.
MUSKELLUNGE	
Clear, *Cerro Gordo*	May and September are the best months. Fish artificial weed beds and rock reefs.
West Okoboji, *Dickinson*	This lake has been the most consistent producer in the last few years. Both catch success and sub-legal action will continue to improve during 1997.
BLUEGILL	
Blue, *Monona*	1997 should be another great year for bluegill in Blue Lake. Large numbers of 7- to 8-inch fish were harvested in 1996 and harvest should be even better in 1997.
Yellow Smoke, *Crawford*	Known for big bluegill and lots of habitat. Huge bluegill, 10 to 11 inches, are caught every year in the lake. If you want quality, not quantity, give it a try.
Little Wall, *Hamilton*	Excellent numbers of fish over 7 inches. May and June are the best months.
Crystal, *Hancock*	Produced well in 1996. Fish the old road bed or near shoreline cover. Plenty of 6- to 8-inchers, some sorting will be necessary.
Dog Creek, *O'Brien*	Anglers should see an upswing in the fishery as good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish dominate the catch.
Mill Creek, *O'Brien*	Good growth observed during 1996 should provide increased catches of angler-acceptable bluegill.
CRAPPIE	
Ingham, *Emmet*	Anglers fishing the submerged, shallow-water timber April through May should experience excellent catches of 8- to 10-inch fish.
Dog Creek, *O'Brien*	1996 surveys revealed good numbers of 10-inch fish. These fish will contribute to the creel during 1997.
Clear, *Cerro Gordo*	Fish the canals in April. 8- to 10-inch fish are common, with a few 12+-inch also available.
Briggs Woods, *Hamilton*	Extremely abundant population of 7- to 8-inch fish.

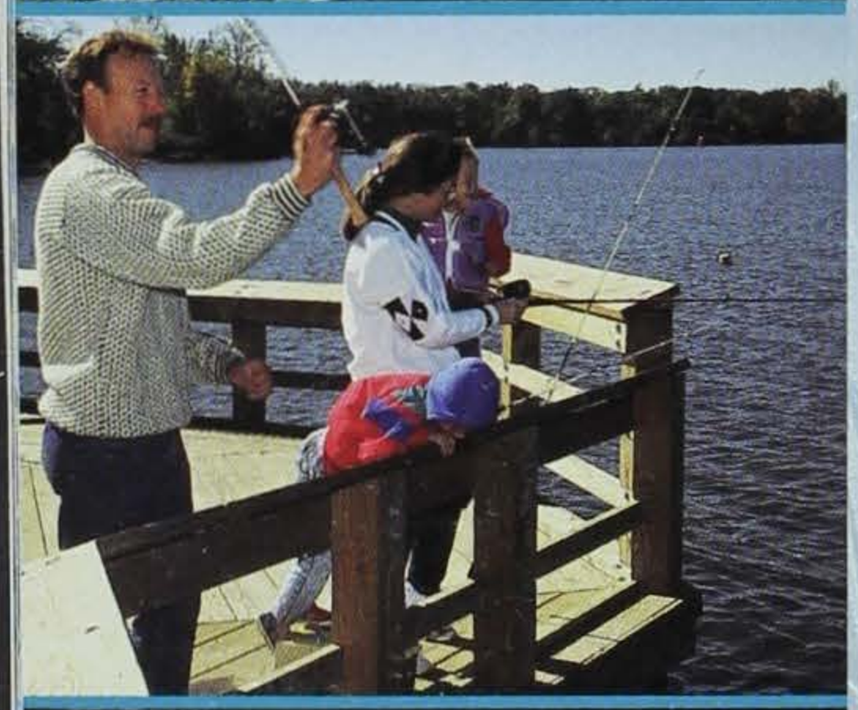
SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
Lower Pine, *Hardin*	Good numbers of 7- to 9-inch fish available during the open-water and ice fishing seasons.
Black Hawk, *Sac*	Large numbers of big crappies harvested fin 1996. These crappies were 9 to 11 inches and were in excellent condition. Look for a repeat in 1997. Early spring in the marina area and late fall off the docks provide the majority of the harvest.
NORTHERN PIKE	
Silver, *Worth*	A high density of 18- to 22-inch fish in this shallow, natural lake. Population surveys revealed 10 percent exceed 24 inches, and 1 percent are more than 30 inches.
Beeds, *Franklin*	Fish the submergent weeds in the lake or below the dam in Spring Creek.
West Okoboji, *Dickinson*	A good population of 3- to 4-pound fish are ready to do battle with the West lake angler. Live bait, spinners and spoons fished in and around the submergent vegetation will produce. Remember to try the hard water angling for these toothy critters.
Tuttle, *Emmet*	This lake and northern pike go together like anglers and good stories. Tuttle has been a consistent producer of good pike for many years and should uphold the tradition in 1997.
Silver, *Palo Alto*	1996 netting reflects a good population of 3-pound fish. Anglers fishing during the early spring, fall or winter will have the best success.
Little Swan, *Dickinson*	Commercial anglers report good numbers of large fish present within the lake.
SMALLMOUTH BASS	
Iowa River, *Hardin*	1996 survey showed excellent numbers of legal size fish, with the largest weighing more than 3 pounds. Practice catch-and-release.
West Fork Des Moines River, *Humboldt*	Not a huge population, but quality size fish. Concentrate your effort near rocky habitat.
Spirit, *Dickinson*	Population stability and quality fish seem to be the norm for this species in this lake, and 1997 should be no exception. Spring and early summer seem to be the productive times, and submerged rocks and various points the productive areas.
West Okoboji, *Dickinson*	An excellent 1997 season is expected for this lake. Finding and fishing the submerged rocks is the key. Remember . . . a variety of sizes will be caught with that state record potential always present!
LARGEMOUTH BASS	
Crystal, *Hancock*	Outstanding numbers of 1- to 2-pound fish, with an opportunity to catch a 3- to 5-pounder.
Briggs Woods, *Hamilton*	Variety of sizes available to anglers -- many legal size. Fish the weed edges and the face of the dam.
Little Wall, *Hamilton*	18-inch length limit has protected a lot of quality-sized fish.
Dog Creek, *O'Brien*	15-inch fish will dominate the catch during 1997, but remember to practice catch-and-release of this important predator species.
Mill Creek, *O'Brien*	Survey results indicate good number of 15-inch fish are available along with a good population of sub-legal fish. Anglers are strongly encouraged to practice catch-and-release here.
YELLOW BASS	
Clear, *Cerro Gordo*	Plenty of yellows remain. These scrappy panfish are excellent to eat. Two year-classes available 8 and 10 inches.
FLATHEAD CATFISH	
Raccoon River, *Carroll*	Lots of big flatheads are caught each year from the Raccoon River. Look for deep holes and use live bait. Chubs and sunfish are the baits of choice by experienced flathead anglers. Remember to release most of these gentle giants to maintain the population.



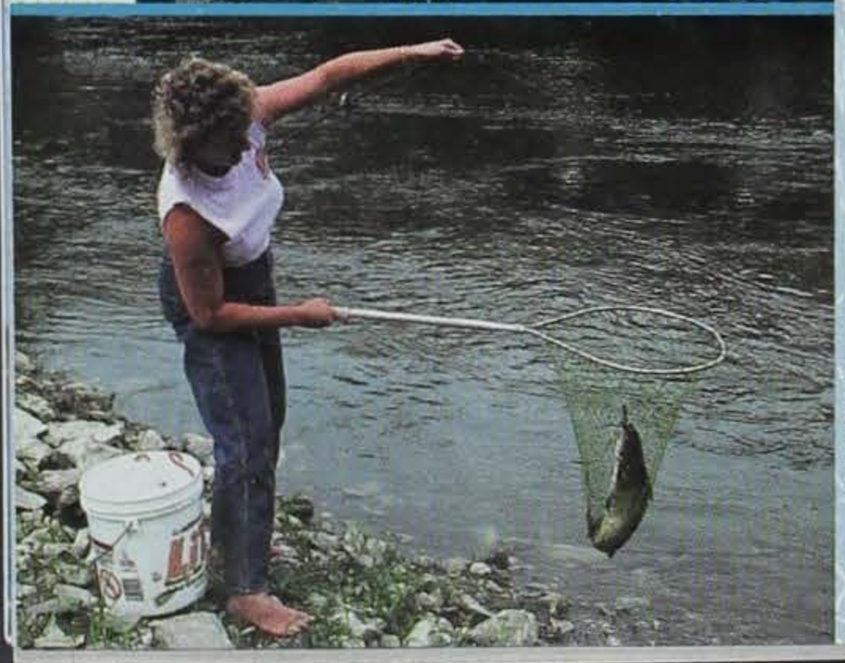
SOUTHWEST

by Joe Schwartz

Ken Formanek



Ron Johnson



Ron Johnson

Remember 1993 -- the year of rain and floods? Well, all that rain produced something other than havoc in southwest Iowa. It produced a good year-class of ***crappies*** in many of our lakes. Evidently crappies spawned successfully during the relatively stable spring and produced good numbers of young. Frequent rains kept our lakes high all summer, increased available habitat and good recruitment, and growth occurred. Crappie, from the 1993 year-class, began to show up in anglers catches last spring when they were seven inches. Because of their great abundance, it was no problem to catch all you wanted, but the size was a little small to be considered acceptable keepers. Growth during 1996 was good and by fall anglers were taking good catches of nine-inch fish. Many of those fish still remain in the lakes, and I look for a bumper crappie year in 1997. Most fish will be nine to ten inches in length and more than acceptable.

Crappie fishing is best along shore in late April and early May, and again in late September and early October. Summer fishing slows significantly, but crappie can usually be caught by drift fishing in deep water or anchoring in flooded trees or brush in deeper water. Minnows or small jigs are favorite baits, and can be used with or without a float.

The following table lists places where crappie fishing will be good this year. However, last year's fisheries surveys showed a strong 1993 year class of crappies at Anita, Prairie Rose, Littlefield, Meadow, Red Rock, Saylorville, Easter, Big Creek, Twelve Mile, Little River and West Lake Osceola, and you may want to concentrate on one of these lakes. If I were only going to go fishing once in 1997, I would fish at Twelve Mile the first weekend in May following a week of good weather with no cold fronts moving through. It should be super.

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
BLUEGILL	
Anita, *Cass*	Consistently large fish. Try the structure.
Badger Creek, *Madison*	Good for large numbers of 7- to 8-inch fish. Should be better than last year.
Beaver, *Dallas*	6-1/2- to 7-1/2-inch fish common.
Big Creek, *Polk*	Large numbers of 6- to 7-inch fish. Try the tree reefs.
Hickory Grove, *Story*	7- to 9-inch fish. Lake will fill this spring and be back to normal.
Icaria, *Adams*	Nice looking 7- to 8-1/2-inch fish with some up to 9-1/2 inches.
Little River, *Decatur*	7- to 9-inch fish are common. Excellent bluegill lake.
Meadow, *Adair*	Good 6- to 9-inch fish. Redear are dandies.
Nine Eagles, *Decatur*	Try marked fish reefs. Good redear are present. Little fishing pressure.
Prairie Rose, *Shelby*	Average 8 inches. Best looking bluegills in a long time.
Twelve Mile, *Union*	Fish 8 to 9 inches are common. Try around flooded trees. Excellent bluegill lake.
Viking, *Montgomery*	8-inchers common. Best in spring and early summer.

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
CRAPPIE	
Anita, *Cass*	First crappie lake to start in the spring. Nice fish 8-1/2 to 10-1/2 inches. It will be the year of the crappie at Anita.
Arrowhead, *Pottawattamie*	7- to 8-inch fish.
Badger Creek, *Madison*	Nice 8- to 9-inch fish.
Big Creek, *Polk*	Most fish will be 7 to 9 inches this year, few 14-inchers. Fish the new structure or jetties.
Don Williams, *Boone*	Nice but inconsistent on catches.
Easter, *Polk*	7- to 8-1/2-inch common, few fish up to 11 inches. High density of crappie.
Green Valley, *Union*	Good numbers of smaller fish. Should be tremendous next year.
Icaria, *Adams*	Fish are up to 1 pound. Try fishing riprapped areas. Good number of 8-inch fish.
Littlefield, *Audubon*	Lots of 8- to 10-inchers last fall. Should be good this spring. Try face of the dam.
Little River, *Decatur*	Try around flooded trees. Lots of 8- to 10-inch fish. Some 12-inchers.
Manawa, *Pottawattamie*	Good early fishing in lagoons.
Meadow, *Adair*	Strong year class of 8- to 9-inch fish and few big ones.
Orient, *Adair*	Always turbid water, but still good crappie fishing, 8 to 9 inches.
Prairie Rose, *Shelby*	Fish are 8 to 11 inches. Good all summer but best in spring.
Red Rock, *Marion*	Big fish. Fish when water is clear, try feeder stream embayments.
Rock Creek, *Jasper*	7- to 8-1/2-inch fish. Fall fishing is best.
Saylorville, *Polk*	Excellent size fish. 8 to 9 inches for most.
Slip Bluff, *Decatur*	8- to 9-inch fish. Few people fish this lake.
Twelve Mile, *Union*	8- to 12-inch and very good numbers. Fish size should be better than last year.
Viking, *Montgomery*	9- to 10-inch, best in spring.
West Lake Osceola, *Clarke*	Fall surveys showed impressive numbers and sizes of crappies.
LARGEMOUTH BASS	
Ahquabi, *Warren*	Excellent catch-and-release fishing. 18-inch length limit on bass.
Anita, *Cass*	Perennial favorite. Bass up to 6 pounds. Fish the structure.
Badger Creek, *Dallas*	Lots of 12- to 16-inch bass with an occasional lunker.
Beaver, *Dallas*	Good catch-and-release fishery for less than 15-inchers.
Big Creek, *Polk*	Try new structure. Face of dam, new silt dikes and jetties.
Easter, *Polk*	Up to 5 pounds. Mostly 10- to 14-inchers.
Farm Ponds	Many private ponds in SW Iowa have good bass.
Green Valley, *Union*	A 22-inch length limit here. Any keeper will be a real trophy.
Little River, *Decatur*	Great fishing. Try submerged brush and trees. Good numbers of 2- to 3-1/2-pounders.
Mariposa, *Jasper*	Good catch-and-release fishery.
Meadow, *Adair*	Good bass lake for fish up to 5 pounds.
Nine Eagles, *Decatur*	Good numbers of small fish, an occasional large fish.
Prairie Rose, *Shelby*	Fish the stake beds and brush piles.
Red Rock, *Marion*	Fish drop-offs or other structure.
Saylorville, *Polk*	Lots of small bass -- few legals. Fish face of dam, Big Creek outlet or any rocky area.
Twelve Mile, *Union*	Excellent for 12- to 18-inch fish. Our most popular tournament lake.
Viking, *Montgomery*	Good population of 12- to 15-inch fish.
West Lake Osceola, *Clarke*	Good summer time bass fishing.
WALLEYE/SAUGEYE	
Des Moines River, *Polk and Boone*	Fish below Corps dams, low head dams, and gravel riffles.
DeSoto, *Harrison*	Best in spring. Fair numbers of 14- to 17-inch fish.
Icaria, *Adams*	Fish are up to 10 pounds.
Little River, *Decatur*	Average fish are 14 to 18 inches.
Manawa, *Pottawattamie*	Was good in '96, looks good for '97. Mostly 14-inch fish.
Saylorville, *Polk*	Fish sandy points, old river channel.
Below Saylorville and Red Rock	Good numbers of fish because concentrated below dams. Fish up to 10 pounds. Scott St. dam also good in spring.

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
Twelve Mile, *Union*	Fish artificial reefs. Fish are 14 to 17 inches. Up to 4 pounds. Best walleye lake for numbers in SW Iowa.
BULLHEADS	
Beaver Lake, *Dallas*	Good growth, good catches.
Green Valley, *Union*	11- to 13-inch fish. Numbers are down.
Little River, *Decatur*	Nice fish, big catches. 10 to 12 inchers.
Manawa, *Pottawattamie*	Nice size fish. Average 1 pound -- 12-inchers.
Rock Creek, *Jasper*	Fish are definitely keepers but not as many as in the past.
Springbrook, *Guthrie*	Medium-sized, but lots of them.
Twelve Mile, *Union*	Nice fish, catches are down, but still worth trying.
CHANNEL CATFISH	
Big Creek, *Polk*	Really nice fish, lots of them and not many catfish anglers.
Cedar, *Madison*	4- to 6-pounders, but you will have to sort through abundant small ones.
Easter, *Polk*	Excellent for fish 12 to 20 inches.
Green Valley, *Union*	Seeing 3- to 5-pounders again.
Icaria, *Adams*	All sizes up to 5 pounds, occasional 15 pounds. 1996 tournament anglers did very well.
Little River, *Decatur*	Fish small bays in midsummer. Many 3- to 10-pounders.
Littlefield, *Audubon*	Fish north shore on strong south wind.
Manawa, *Pottawattamie*	Good numbers, most 2 to 6 pounds. Up to 12 pounds.
Meadow, *Adair*	Fish are 2 to 6 pounds.
Mormon Trail, *Adair*	Good numbers.
Nine Eagles, *Decatur*	1- to 3-pound cats are abundant and under-used by anglers.
Nodaway, *Adair*	Best early. Vegetation makes fishing difficult in summer.
Orient, *Adair*	Stocked every year.
Red Rock, *Marion*	12 to 20 inches -- best from Mile Long bridge and towards dam.
Rock Creek, *Jasper*	Shallow, fertile lake with good catfish of all sizes.
Saylorville, *Polk*	Excellent channel and flathead fishing. Lots of 2- to 4-pound fish.
Summit Lake, *Union*	1- to 3-pounders common. New boat ramp makes for good access.
SW Rivers	Catfish are abundant in all of our rivers.
Twelve Mile, *Union*	Cats 2 to 3 pounds common, good early on cut shad.
Viking, *Montgomery*	All sizes to 6 pounds. A few big ones.
West Lake Osceola, *Clarke*	1- to 3-pounders with a few 12-pounders.
Willow, *Harrison*	Abundant 12- to 14-inch cage-reared fish.
YELLOW PERCH	
Anita, *Cass*	Abundant 8- to 9-inchers easily caught on worms.
YELLOW BASS	
Carter Lake, *Pottawattamie*	Lots of small fish.
Icaria, *Adams*	6- to 9-inch. Hard hitters, good eating, lots of fish.
Manawa, *Pottawattamie*	Lots of small fish, but an occasional pounder.
WHITE BASS	
Red Rock, *Marion*	Fish midsummer, off of dam towards beach or up towards marina. Also good in Des Moines River up to Scott St. dam in spring.

SOUTHEAST

by Stephen J. Waters

Fisheries biologists' surveys indicate a terrific year of fishing is scheduled for 1997. Several of the lakes which have a redeveloping fishery (Hawthorn, Keomah and Wapello) are back and are looking for anglers. Plus, many more water bodies are ready for an Iowa time-honored tradition -- fishing.

I suggest gathering up the family and fishing equipment soon after ice-out and beginning a great fishing season by chasing Iowa's most popular game fish -- the ***channel catfish***. Early catfishing was made for the family, because the fishing is easy and the action is fast. Also, this type of angling is typically done on shore.

When water temperatures reach about 50-55°F catfish begin a feeding spree -- feeding on fish that have died during the winter. Fish your bait (cut baits are best) in the shallower (two- to six-foot), warmer portion of a lake or river with the wind blowing across or toward you. Use an egg-type sinker to lighten the bait, and set the hook after a short run. The best areas for early spring catfish angling are lakes Rathbun, Coralville, Darling, Pleasant Creek, Kent, Macbride, the Mississippi River and all inland rivers.

The Mississippi's "Mr. Mississippi Whiskers" can be caught in nearly all parts of the river using a variety of baits, but best bets are above and below wingdams and riprapped heads of islands where there is a current. Stumpfields and riprapped shorelines are hotspots during the prespawn and spawning periods. The size limit set on commercial fishing in 1985 has resulted in more spawning-sized adults. This allowed nature to replenish catfish numbers benefiting both sport and commercial anglers.

The Great River's ***walleye*** and ***sauger*** angling is what legends are made of. The lock-and-dam habitat produces great catches in late winter, early spring and late fall. Jigging sonars or jig-and-minnow combinations are highly effective. Wingdam fishing during summer and early fall will also produce stimulating action. Try backtrolling crankbaits or three-way nightcrawler rigs on the upstream side of the wingdams. An upside to the summer angling period is the peace and quiet of having a portion of the river to yourself, whereas, the lock-and-dam fishing can be a bit competitive for some folks. Keep in mind, while fishing the Mississippi for walleye, a 15-inch minimum size limit exists.

The Mississippi River also produces excellent catches of ***white bass***, ***drum***, ***carp***, ***crappie***, ***bluegill*** and ***largemouth bass***. White bass frequent similar habitats of walleye and sauger, and serve as a great bonus fish. Look for crappie, bluegill and largemouth bass in the river's backwaters near stumpfields, brush and vegetation. Remember, there is a 14-inch length limit on largemouth bass.

Interest in ***flathead catfish*** seems to have reached a new high in southeast Iowa due primarily to great fishing for these "big ones." Bank pole, or rod and reel, using green sunfish or bluegill for bait, is the preferred technique. Fish deep holes in summer and fall, and around bridge pilings in interior rivers and in side channels, eddy areas, and below locks and dams on the Mississippi River.

For ***bluegill*** and ***crappie*** traditional baits and techniques are highly successful, but why not try a new angling technique or two. Don't put your ice-fishing equipment away when the warm season arrives. Keep your ice flies, waxworms and small bobbers handy because these baits often out-produce the traditional bluegill baits. And, why not try flyfishing for spring crappie and bluegill? What could be more fun for a bluegill angler than flyfishing with small surface poppers during the morning and evening hours of summer for big bluegill? Have you tried drift fishing for bluegills and crappie during the summer when they have moved away from shore and are suspended about 8 to 12 feet below the surface? Lower your baits to this level, and let the wind or trolling motor push you around the lake. Note where you catch fish and return for a similar drift pattern. I believe you'll find new techniques, bait and equipment can revitalize one's interest in angling and enhance fishing experiences.

Effective ***bass*** size regulations are a benefit to all anglers. With an excellent bass population, these important predators can whittle away at the panfish, improv-

Sonny Satre

Ken Formanek

Ron Johnson

ing their size for positive angler benefits. Additional benefits are improved bass catch rates and larger sizes of bass to catch. Give size limits a chance, release a bass and do as the bass does -- eat the panfish. Enjoy the best of both worlds.

Southern Iowa is blessed with several excellent bass-bluegill lakes. But perhaps the best systems are small in size, almost too numerous to count and are mostly located on private property. These excellent fisheries are called farm ponds.

Ponds are an excellent spot to start the new fishing season. Because of their size, they are the first systems to warm up, meaning a lot of early action. Also, they are the best fishing holes to catch lunker bass and bluegill. But remember these mini-lakes are, for the most part, located on private property and require the owners permission for angling opportunities.

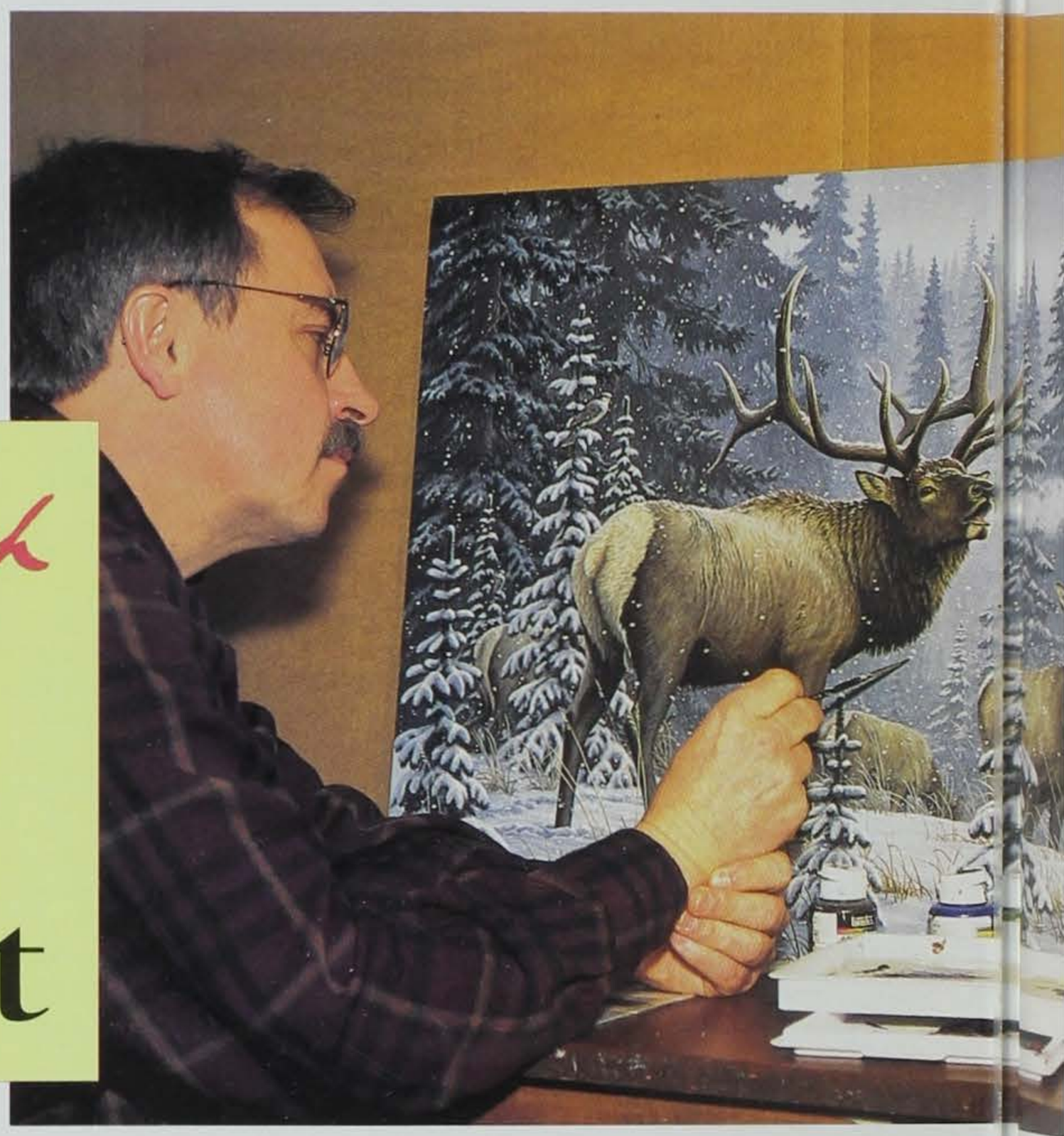
For further information on fishing and fishing hotspots call (800)ASK-FISH. For a free copy of *Iowa Trout Fishing Guide*, *Iowa Fishing Guide* and/or the *1997 Iowa Fishing Regulations* booklet, write the Iowa DNR, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034 or call (515)281-5145.

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
BLUEGILL	
Mississippi River	
Pool 16	Andalusia backwaters, Credit Island Slough, Wyoming Island Slough.
Pool 17	Big Timber, Cleveland Slough, Hidden Acres, Bogus Island, Blanchard Slough, and Eagle Fill.
Pool 18	Huron Island, Burnt Pocket, Johnson Slough, and Dasher Chute.
Pool 19	Burlington Island, Turkey Chute, Blackhawk Bottoms, Lead Island Chute, Niota weedbeds, Rabbit Island riprap, Devils Creek weedbed and Gray's Bay.
Farm Ponds	Exceptional angling -- best chance for a trophy.
Pleasant Creek, *Linn*	Good quality, many 8- to 9-inch fish available.
Geode, *Henry*	Average harvest size 7 to 8+ inches. Trophy fish available.
Hannen, *Benton*	Good numbers, 6 to 8 inches.
Hawthorn, *Mahaska*	Good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish.
Kent, *Johnson*	All sizes, easy shoreline access.
Keomah, *Mahaska*	Good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish.
Diamond, *Poweshiek*	Average harvest size 6 to 8 inches.
Red Haw, *Lucas*	Good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish. New structure in lake.
Union Grove, *Tama*	Low numbers but quality fish up to 9 inches.
Sugema, *Van Buren*	Excellent numbers of 7- to 8-inch fish.
CHANNEL CATFISH	
Mississippi River	All pools excellent
Inland Rivers	Good to excellent
Rathbun, *Appanoose*	Exceptional fishery; all sizes. Post ice-out period excellent.
Coralville, *Johnson*	Exceptional fishery, all sizes.
Otter Creek, *Tama*	Lots of 2- to 4-pound fish.
Kent, *Johnson*	Excellent fishery, 12 to 16 inches average.
Miami, *Monroe*	Good for a variety of sizes.
Macbride, *Johnson*	Excellent for 2- to 5-pound fish.
Darling, *Washington*	Good for a variety of sizes.
Geode, *Henry*	Average harvest size 15 to 18 inches.
Iowa, *Iowa*	Good numbers of 2- to 3-pound fish.
CRAPPIE	
Rathbun, *Appanoose*	Superb crappie lake. Average size 9 to 12 inches. Trophy fish available.
Mississippi River	Same comments as in bluegill section.
Coralville, *Johnson*	Excellent for 8- to 10-inch fish, 13 to 15 inches common.
Odessa, *Louisa*	Average harvest size 8 to 10 inches.
Geode, *Henry*	Average harvest size 8 to 10 inches.
Iowa, *Iowa*	Good numbers from 8 to 10 inches.
Darling, *Washington*	Average harvest size 7 to 10 inches; trophy fish available.

SPECIES Lake or Stream, *County*	Comments
Miami, *Monroe*	Good numbers of 8-inch fish, 10-inch fish available.
Diamond, *Poweshiek*	High numbers of 7- to 10-inch fish.
Macbride, *Johnson*	High numbers of 7-inch fish, 10- to 11-inch fish available.
Sugema, *Van Buren*	Excellent angling; 9- to 10-inch fish most common.
LARGEMOUTH BASS	
Mississippi River	Same comments as bluegill section.
Farm Ponds	Best chance for a trophy. Great fishing.
Miami, *Monroe*	Good numbers,various sizes.
Pleasant Creek, *Linn*	18-inch size limit. Excellent catch-and-release with fish up to 8 pounds.
Iowa, *Iowa*	Good numbers, various sizes.
Darling, *Washington*	Variety of sizes, lots of structure.
Geode, *Henry*	Good catch-and-release fishery. Some trophy fish.
Macbride, *Johnson*	Getting better every year; lots of 2- to 3-pounders.
Sugema, *Van Buren*	18-inch size limit. Excellent catch-and-release for 14- to 17-inch fish. Larger fish present.
Diamond, *Poweshiek*	Good numbers of 2- to 4-pound fish with trophy sizes present.
Wapello, *Davis*	No-kill regulation; lots of 10- to 15-inch fish.
Hawthorn, *Mahaska*	Good numbers of slot length fish (12- to 16-inch).
Keomah, *Mahaska*	Good number of 12- to 15-inch fish.
WALLEYE	
Mississippi River	Seek locks and dams, and wingdams. Excellent for sauger, too.
Rathbun, *Appanoose*	Good numbers of 15- to 21-inch fish.
Macbride, *Johnson*	Good numbers for skilled anglers.
Des Moines, *Wapello*	Hot action below the Ottumwa hydropower dam.
Coralville, *Johnson*	Good in spring and late fall in upper end and around I-80 bridge.
Pleasant Creek, *Linn*	Good numbers of 1- to 3-pound fish.
WHITE BASS	
Mississippi River	Seek locks and dams and wingdams.
Rathbun, *Appanoose*	High numbers of 10- to 15-inch fish.
Coralville, *Johnson*	Lots of 12- to 14-inch fish.Best in late summer.
Macbride, *Johnson*	Good number of 10- to 14-inch fish.
Des Moines, *Wapello*	Hot action below the Ottumwa hydropower dam.
FLATHEAD CATFISH	
Mississippi River	Best below locks and dams, wingdams, and side channels.
Skunk, and lower Iowa, Des Moines and Wapsipinicon Rivers	Big fish in deep holes during summer and around bridge pilings. Good numbers of 10- to 30-pound fish.
Coralville, *Johnson*	Good numbers of 10- to 30-pound fish.
Rathbun, *Appanoose*	Good numbers of 10- to 30-pound fish.
SAUGEYE	
Iowa River, *Johnson*	Exceptional fishery; lots of 2 to 4 pound fish with 10 pound fish available.
Coralville, *Johnson*	Best in early spring and late fall around I-80 bridge.
Sugema, *Van Buren*	Fair numbers of 14 to 20 inch fish.
Union Grove, *Tama*	High numbers of 1 to 3 pound fish.
BULLHEAD	
Keomah, *Mahaska*	10- to 12-inch fish.
Macbride, *Johnson*	Best east of causeway in May and June.
Otter Creek, *Tama*	Lots of 10- to 12-inch fish.

Larry Zach
One Hot Artist

by Lowell Washburn



Iowa wildlife artist Larry Zach is currently one of the hottest items on the American art scene. A critical eye for detail, coupled with an uncanny ability to recreate the subtle nuances of fog, morning mist, and winter snowfall has resulted in his being selected as one of the top 20 most popular artists in the nation (1992) and as one of the top ten hottest new American artists in 1995.

Zach has currently been named 1997 Artist of the Year by the National Wild Turkey Federation, and limited-edition prints of his painting of spring turkeys (see cover of this issue) will be auctioned at more than 850 fund-raising banquets across the country. Zach is also the creator of the 1997 Iowa Habitat Stamp, depicting white-tailed deer and pheasants in a winter landscape. (Iowa's Habitat Stamp program may change if a new, computer-based licensing program begins in 1998. However, if the current program continues, Zach has been picked to design the 1998 and 1999 stamps as well.)

The beginning of Larry Zach's career as a professional wildlife artist can be traced to 1983 when his painting of a wood duck pair was selected as winner of the Iowa Duck Stamp contest. In 1987, he captured the "grand slam" of the Iowa art world by being simultaneously selected as Artist of the Year by Iowa Ducks Unlimited, Iowa Pheasants Forever, and the Iowa Wild Turkey Federation.

"At that point it seemed as if people really began to get interested in my work," recalls Zach. "They asked to come to my studio and to view my other paintings. The fact is, I didn't even a have a studio and there were no other paintings," he chuckles.

"Up until then, becoming a wildlife artist had been a fantasy. But when people started calling, I figured if the fantasy was ever going to be real, this was the time," Zach recalls.

In 1990, he made the difficult decision to resign from the Ankeny school system where he had spent 18 years teaching junior-high science.

"I had the privilege of working with many fine people in Ankeny," says Zach. "Through teaching, I sought to raise the environmental consciousness of my students. I decided that as an artist I'd still be doing basically the same thing but now it would be through my art rather than through the classroom. After 36 years of being on one side or the other of a desk, I'm both a lifelong learner and a lifelong teacher," he adds.

It wasn't long until Zach had earned a reputation among art collectors as

Lowell Washburn

■ **Zach has resisted the temptation to increase his output, and still pours tremendous amounts of time, energy and research into each new painting. This attention to detail has earned him top nationwide honors.**

being an extremely versatile artist. His subjects ranged from bobolinks to big game, from titmice to turkeys. But in spite of the variety it soon became apparent that white-tailed deer were his favorite subject.

"I find that whenever I set out to study a certain species, that the more I learn about it, the more fascinated I become. That has certainly been true with deer," he says.

A keen desire to observe whitetails in their natural habitats was at least part of the reason Zach took up bow hunting in 1968. The sport has since become a passion, but the artist now only draws his bow when presented with the opportunity to take a very large, mature buck. Although Zach passes up nearly 99 percent of the bucks he encounters, he has still managed to gather one of the finest collections of trophy-class antlers to be found anywhere in the Midwest. Some of those same racks find their way back into Zach's paintings.

But, bagging a trophy buck is no longer the most important measure of a successful hunt. And, Zach has come to realize the hours spent in a tree stand are also some of his most important in terms of research and inspiration. A sketch pad and camera are never far from his side.

"When in the field, I'm always collecting reference material and making observations, always taking photos," says Zach.

While attending an art symposium at Yellowstone National Park, Zach took time out to photograph bugling elk and by week's end had gathered 1,800 reference slides. The artist admits to having missed out on a few of the workshop's classes, but adds he had waited a lifetime to be in Yellowstone during the elk rut.

"Last season, I shot more than four and one-half hours of video of big bucks and never did get around to shooting one," says Zach.

"While in the tree stand, I also spend a lot of time sketching," he says. "With a camera you can gather a lot of information very quickly. But when you pick up the sketch pad it forces you to look at things more closely and that brings out the detail. I think it's important to make good use of all the tools you have available and then use each to its best advantage."

"I spend a lot of hours just tramping the woods while other artists are probably painting," says Zach. "I'm always looking for the perfect tree, the perfect light, or maybe some new idea. I'm especially fond of the moods created by things like fog or snow storms. If I had my way, I'd never miss a single sunrise or sunset."

Once Zach decides to turn a certain scene or idea into a new painting, the actual artwork begins with a series of small, preliminary studies. These experimental paintings undergo constant changes and ultimately serve as the blueprint for what will become the finished work.

"Once the work is underway, I may spend 90 percent of my time just sitting there, staring at the canvas wondering

White Oak Publishing

White Oak Publishing

White Oak Publishing

■ **(Clockwise from above)**
1997 Iowa Habitat Stamp.
Doing a watercolor study of gobbler head,
"Prairie Pair -- Bobolinks" -- Currently cover of *Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas.*
First-grade field trip to Zach's studio.
Glassing the landscape in Colorado's high sage country.

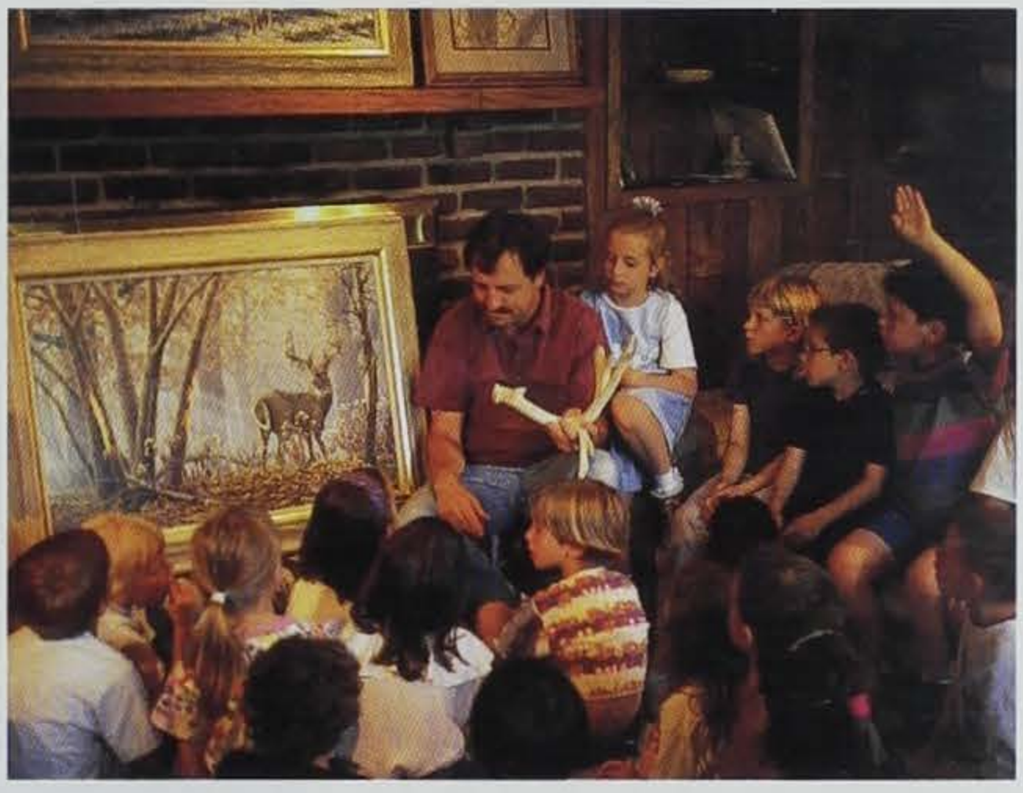
what to do next," says Zach.

"Sometimes the painting doesn't work and there are nights when I can't sleep. I have to get up, take a walk and try to figure [the painting] out. Sometimes, I go back to the woods to check on details, go out and shoot more photos or make some more sketches. Sooner or later things fall into place."

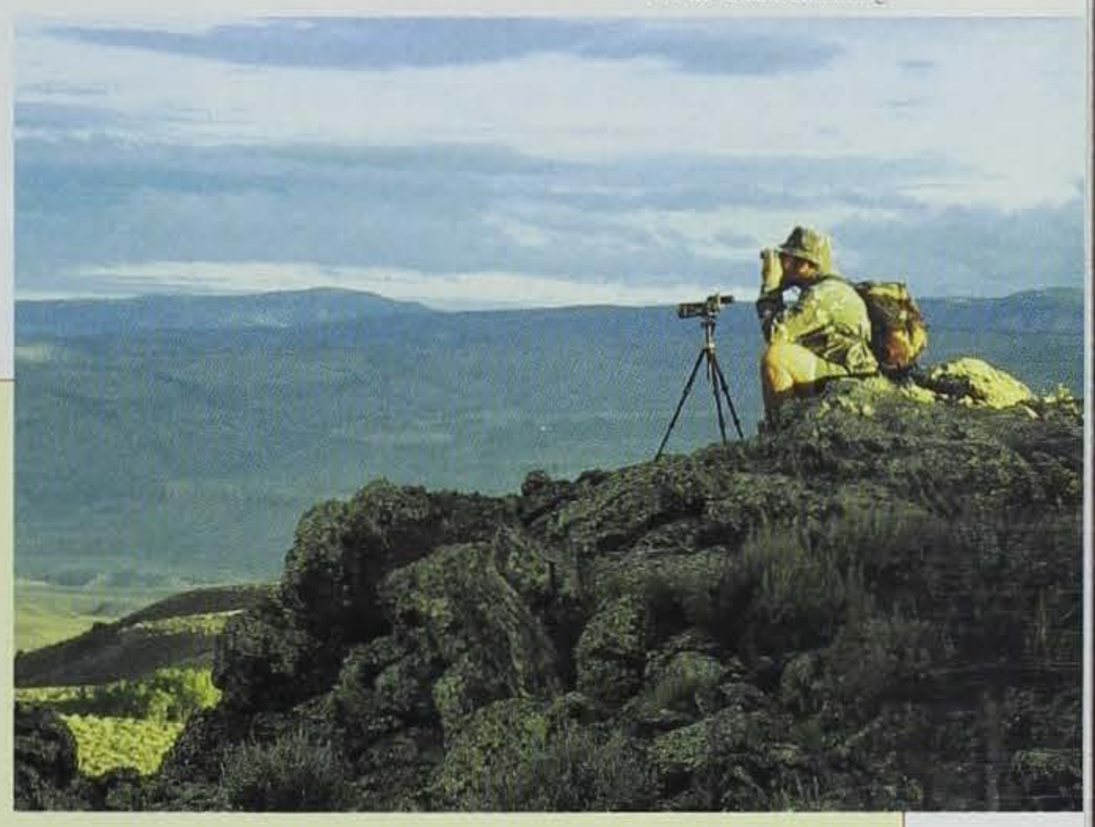
The painting "Broken Solitude" (white-tailed deer) was one of those ever changing works. The piece took 14 months to complete and included nearly six months of full-time painting. The effort paid off and the work was selected as one of the top 20 most popular prints for 1992. It has since become one of the most popular whitetail paintings of all time.

Limited-edition prints of another whitetail painting, "November Sunrise," were released in 1989 at a price of $80 each. Today, the same print sells for $1,500 to $2,000 -- if you can find one. But, secondary market art prices are definitely not one of Larry Zach's favorite topics.

White Oak Publishing



White Oak Publishing



"I really don't want to see people buying artwork solely as an investment," he says. "My paintings are intended to be a way for people to enjoy nature. I want the people who buy my work to take it home, hang it on the wall, and then enjoy looking at it. That's what it's for. If I can have someone walk up to one of my prints and say, 'Yeah, I've seen that,' then that's the highest form of compliment I can receive."

In spite of the unprecedented demand for his artwork, Zach has resisted the temptation to increase his output. He still pours tremendous amounts of time, energy, and research into each new painting. He doesn't accept commissions, and at best, completes no more than two major works per year. On three separate occasions he has destroyed entire editions of his prints when they failed to meet his exacting standards.

"I realize that my methods result in producing less work than I might be capable of, but hopefully the quality will be there," says Zach. "I strive for detail and my goal is to represent nature as accurately as I can, but at the same time I also want it to be art."

Profile

Larry Zach's childhood was spent exploring the fields and woodlands around the family farm near the Iowa River in southeastern Iowa. After graduating from high school, he earned a degree in fish and wildlife biology from Iowa State University.

Zach then served as a combat infantryman in South Vietnam where, among other honors, he earned the Bronze Star for Valor. Even while in southeast Asia, he never lost his fascination with the natural world. While acting as squad point man he collected tropical butterflies with a devise fashioned from a military-issue mosquito head net and stiff jungle vines. Each new species was carefully folded in toilet paper, stored in a discarded grenade canister, and shipped back to Iowa. The collection, along with other Vietnam mementos, remains on display at his parent's home.

Upon returning from the military, Zach studied science education and museum techniques, earning a masters degree at the University of Iowa. At Ankeny, he taught junior-high science for 18 years, and was twice selected as Teacher of the Year.

In 1990, he resigned from the classroom to pursue a full-time career in wildlife art. He has since become one of the most popular new American artists. Zach and his wife, Marcia, own and operate the White Oak Publishing company in Ankeny, Iowa. For information on limited edition prints, contact White Oak Publishing, 901 SE Trilein, Ankeny, IA 50021; phone, (515)964-1570.

-- *LW*

Barging In

On Spirit Lake

Article and photos by Jim Christianson

It wasn't quite the QE II, but it was creating quite a spectacle. What was a 20-ton barge doing on Spirit Lake? Why . . . creating habitat, of course.

Northwest and north-central Iowa are beneficiaries of lakes created thousands of years ago by glaciers. These active ice flows left myriads of natural habitat within the lakes. Habitat consisting of various-sized rocks forming underwater and exposed reefs and shoreline riprap protecting the lakeshores from erosion. Vegetation above and below the surface. And, more subtle substrate or bottom materials -- sand, silt, gravel and cobble arranged by the contours of the lake. All providing for a variety of aquatic species, from fish to microscopic plankton. These various natural habitats influence the aquatic environment by providing food, shelter and oxygen to lake inhabitants and ultimately influence what anglers are most interested in -- the fish.

However, through lake evolution, habitat changes and, in the process, leaves some voids. This is where fish management practices or habitat manipulation is important. Manipulating habitat, in the form of additions or artificial replacement, is a somewhat new practice to Iowa's natural lakes. Habitat additions have been done rather extensively in artificial lakes, but a concerted effort to expand habitat manipulation to all lake types is currently in progress.

Habitat manipulation in natural lakes is done primarily by adding structure to simulate vegetation and attract fish for the angler. Various materials have been used, from commercially patented Berkley Fish Hab™ to discarded Christmas trees.

Materials for habitat are endless, but is generally restricted to what would be environmentally compatible to a natural lake environment. Rocks, which the glaciers deposited by the tons in natural lakes, have most recently

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■ (Left) Barge with central dump open. The barge's size alone -- 50 feet long, 30 feet wide and approximately 40,000 pounds -- drew a lot of attention.

The reef was built with 1,250 tons of fieldstone and measures approximately 10 to 15 feet wide at the top by 300 feet long, and three to four feet high.

■ **The barge was capable of transporting approximately 10 to 15 tons of rock per load to the drop site. Notice the rock "crowder" at the front.**

been used to enhance the fish habitat. For years, lakeshore residents have used existing lake rocks or hauled in rocks to improve and protect the lake's shoreline. This has, no doubt, contributed to improved water quality and fish habitat, but until recently very little work has been done to either build or improve existing underwater rock reefs . . . that is until last July on Spirit Lake. A few years ago a project was conceived to build a rock reef on the lake. A contour map was examined and a general location was chosen. The area selected was in the southern one-third of the lake which is somewhat devoid of rock structure. Now the question was how to get the rocks into place. Initial ideas were to either place the rocks on the ice or drop them from some type of barge in open water.

After some consideration and consultation with contractors, it was decided the reef would be built with native fieldstone and placed from some conveyance in open water. Giese Construction at Fort Dodge was the successful bidder for the project. Now, some of the problem solving had to be done. With some good old ingenuity, head scratching and mechanical aptitude, Kuhlman Manufacturing of Spirit Lake designed and built a center-dump, self-propelled barge capable of transporting approximately 10 to 15 tons of rock per load to the drop site. The reef site's general location was chosen on paper, but needed to be pinpointed. The bottom was probed to find a site with a fairly firm substrate, and a specific site was chosen. With this accomplished, a lakeshore work station was set up at south Marble Beach, with consideration given to proximity to the drop site, minimal interference with the public's use of the lake and enough area to accommodate the necessary loading operation. The barge was transported to the lake with a low-boy semi truck and set out on a maiden voyage. This alone drew some spectators at the south shore boat ramp just because of the barge's size -- 50 feet long, 30 feet wide and approximately 40,000 pounds.

The barge was piloted to the work location and moored. All through the project but especially at the beginning, modifications were constantly being made by the Giese and Kuhlman crews. The overt activity and noise of rock handling, heightened spectator curiosity. Some individuals actually rode the barge to the drop site. The project was completed in about 10 days with 1,250 tons of fieldstone used to build a reef that is approximately 10 to 15 feet wide at the top by 300 feet long, and three to four feet high.

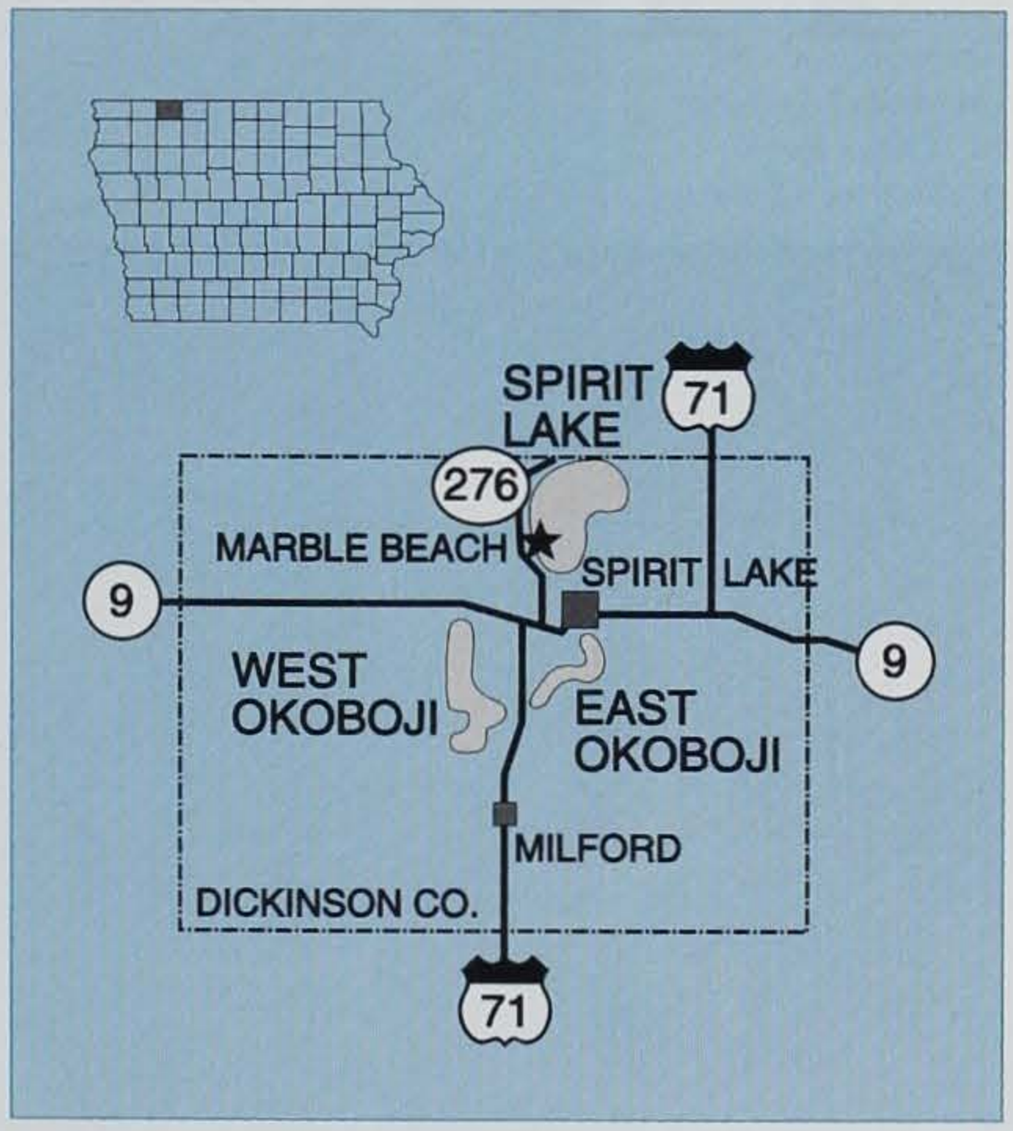
Does this habitat work benefit the fish and, ultimately, the angler? Habitat projects have been done on various lakes with varying degrees of success. Most of the projects do a good job of attracting and holding fish, and studies show if enough habitat is added to a lake (greater than 25 percent of its surface area) the carrying capacity of that lake -- its ability to hold more fish -- can be increased. There were fish around the new reef area at Spirit Lake before it was completed. These fish (mostly bullheads) were probably attracted to the site by food stirred up by the dropping rocks. About one week after the project was finished, walleyes were caught at the reef site. It doesn't

take long for fish to find good habitat, and over time this rock reef will undoubtedly get better.

Artificial habitat in natural lakes has potential as a resource management tool and remember . . . whether natural or artificial, fish habitat is a key element both for the fish and anglers of a natural lake.

Jim Christianson is a fisheries biologist for the department at the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery.

■ **About one week after the project was finished, walleyes were caught at the reef site.**



Oh, Give Me A Home

by Pat Schlarbaum

Don Poggensee

Ty Smedes

■ **Screech owl (above), eastern bluebird (right)**

It's special observing wildlife at close range, and seeing songbirds providing for their young is especially pleasant. Iowa's diverse nesting songbird populations require many habitats to successfully nest and raise their broods. Some, like the woodland-nesting whip-poor-wills and ovenbirds, prefer to nest in the leaves on the forest floor. Veerys and cuckoos need low shrubby areas in mature woodlands, while American redstarts, wood thrushes and vireos would be located somewhat higher, four to 50 feet up, in the fork of a tree branch. High in the woodland canopy, American crows and great horned owls prefer a commanding view of their surroundings to raise young.

Many of our grassland nesters, like vesper and grasshopper sparrows, join bobolinks in remnant prairie areas to nest. Bluejays and barn swallows have acclimated to woodlots and farm buildings, but what about those birds that prefer to nest in cavities? Belted kingfishers and some swallows, such as bank and rough-winged, excavate their nest cavities in dirt, along cutbanks of rivers and streams. Cliff swallows group their jug-like, mud houses in large colonies in protected spots under bridges, while tree swallows select a wooden cavity. The odd hole in a tree or a well-constructed nestbox provided by people can become the nesting place for a group of birds called *cavity nesters*.

Cavity-nesting birds consist of two types -- primary and secondary. Primary cavity nesters, like woodpeckers (red-headed, downy, hairy or red-bellied) and northern flickers do the heavy construction for most cavity nesters drilling holes or hollowing out nesting and roosting spaces. Secondary cavity nesters, such as eastern bluebirds, black-capped chickadees and tree swallows, use holes made by primary cavity nesters, in addition to holes formed by natural processes of decay, insects, fire or breakage which are used by American kestrels, screech-owls, woodducks and barred owls. Typically, it is the secondary cavity-nesting birds that use nestboxes.

Many Iowans are realizing the pleasures of assisting cavity nesters by constructing, placing, monitoring and maintaining artificial nestboxes. A nestbox trail consists of a number of boxes interspersed along suitable habitat for specific birds. For example, some bluebird enthusiasts

regularly check between five to more than 100 nestboxes along their "trails," and are rewarded by seeing a favorite species respond to their stewardship.

Many natural snag (standing dead or dying tree) trees contain a variety of nesting cavities. Generally, the bigger the snag the greater the value to birds. Large snags provide greater area for excavation and feeding and a larger number of holes for several primary cavity-nesting species. Where snag trees are limited, artificial nestbox structures can assist wildlife. Nest boxes should be constructed with the individual species in mind, particularly hole sizes, since the entrance determines what kinds of birds can enter the box.

European starlings are pernicious cavity nesters that are non-native and considered a scourge to other cavity-nesting birds. If you wish to attract a smaller bird, be sure the hole is only as large as necessary, or the more aggressive starling may usurp the box.

Other construction tips to consider:

♦ Don't put perches on nest boxes; only English sparrows and European starlings prefer perches.

♦ A dry box is a better box. If at all possible, the roof should enclose the box completely.

♦ The bottom should be recessed 1/4-inch to prevent rain from seeping across the floor and up into the nest.

♦ Access to the box should be by a hinged front or side piece, when possible.

♦ Wood is the best all-around material for nest boxes. Softwood such as pine is appropriate for smaller nestboxes, but cedar or cypress may be used for larger boxes.

♦ Boxes may be preserved using linseed oil, but only on the outside. It's been observed by "Mr. Woodduck," Frederic Leopold, that "There's nothing better than melted bees' wax for a preservative." *Do not use wood treated with green preservative (Wolmanized).*

♦ Boxes should be placed on their own pole wherever possible, with predator guards to discourage raccoons, cats and snakes.

Don Poggensee

If properly constructed and maintained, nest boxes should last 12 to 15 years and provide many nesting opportunities to songbirds, kestrels, owls and bats. Used nests should be cleaned from nesting structures for sanitary reasons, as soon as possible after young fledge.

The Iowa Wildlife Diversity Program, in cooperation with the DNR's parks bureau, has designed a nest structure trail for cavity- and platform-nesting birds in Ledges State Park, near Boone. This educational project includes 12 demonstration nesting structures for birds and mammals indigenous to the central Iowa region. Proper placement of the boxes in suitable habitat and interpretation of each species' biological needs are provided at each structure. Platform-nesting birds, like mourning doves and American robins, nest in the forks of branches or on platform shelves. The nesting trail includes structures for American robin, eastern bluebird, northern flicker, American kestrel, black-capped chickadee, mourning dove, barred owl, great-crested flycatcher, tree swallow, woodduck, screech owl, house wren and bats.

Hopefully, your walk in the park will include an appreciation of the many types and ages of trees. Biological communities need diversity -- a multitude of offerings. In addition to many fruit-bearing trees (dogwoods, serviceberry, cedar and crabapple), shrubs such as the hazelnut, gooseberry and raspberry offer food, nesting and escape cover.

Many backyard or "back forty" woodlots can be improved by following some of these same principles when landscaping for wildlife. Plantings that provide a continuum of food from summer to late winter, a variety of nesting stata and heights, and escape cover from predators and the elements will improve wildlife habitat. Where possible, maintain brush piles and existing snags to provide homes for wildlife. Dead, nondiseased trees, can offer much more than a warming fire on a winter's night. Our exuberance to "clean up" woodlots should consider a more far-reaching approach to the health of the area. Nutrient recycling,

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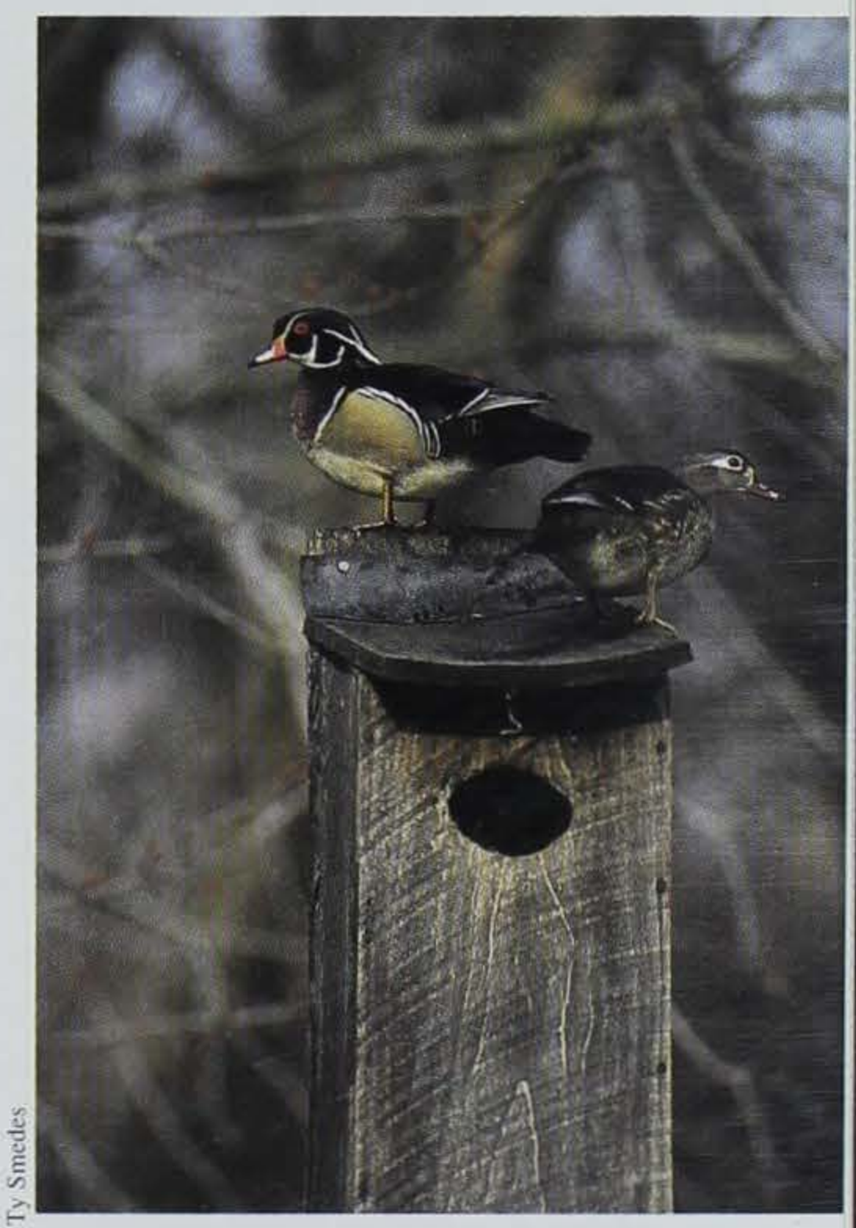
food provision and nesting opportunities can be provided by allowing natural degeneration to occur.

Where desirable, cavities in living trees can be created by selecting a limb at least three inches in diameter and pruning it off about six inches from the trunk. Over the years this will form a natural cavity. Elm, ash, sycamore, mulberry and basswood are especially prone to forming natural cavities. Timber stand improvement plans may require culling undesirable trees, opening the canopy and allows forest regeneration. Snag trees can be created by girdling and thus killing a few of these undesirable (wolf) trees more than 12 inches in diameter. Girdle by removing a three- to four-inch wide belt of outer bark and inner bark (cambium) around the tree.

Many pines live for only a hundred years in our climate and have not survived the stressful years since 1993. A mature yard-tree that has died can be given a "new life" by trimming away excess branches and providing an



Ty Smedes

■ (Left) Cavity holes. Dead, nondiseased trees, can offer much more than a warming fire on a winter's night.
Typically, it is the secondary cavity-nesting birds, such as the chickadee (top) and woodduck, that use nestboxes.

■ Bluebirds in nestbox. (Below) Tree swallow in a bluebird box. In areas of limited natural snags and cavities, nest boxes can provide a necessary habitat component to assist local wildlife.

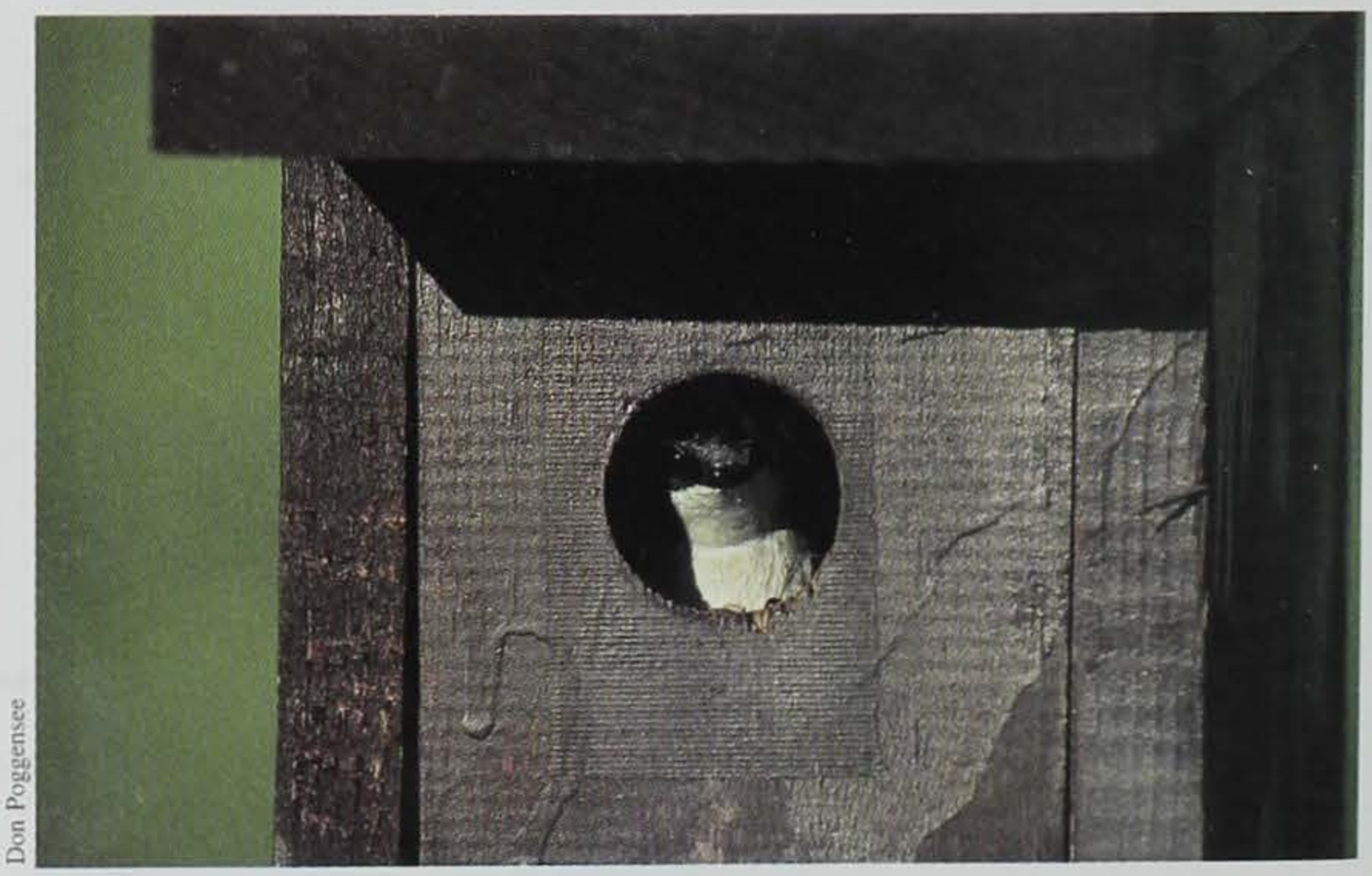
Kip Ladage

attractive sculptured tree. Where falling trees or branches are not a concern, these large snags provide numerous forage and nesting sites for cavity nesters. And, sloughing bark is ideal for harboring insect-eating bats.

A good source of information concerning nestboxes and nesting structures for wildlife is *Woodworking for Wildlife* published by the Minnesota DNR for $9.95 plus $3 shipping and postage. Write the Minnesota DNR, 500 Lafayette Road, Box 7, St. Paul, MN 55155. Phone (800)657-3757. ISU Extension publication Pm-1351b, *Managing Iowa Habitats: Wildlife Needs That Dead Tree* is beneficial reading. Also, *Iowa's Bluebird Directory* is available from Jaclyn Hill, 2946 Ubben, Ellsworth IA 50075 for $4 and includes much useful bluebird information.

Obviously, woodlands providing suitable nesting habitat for all forest-nesting birds is preferred, but in areas of limited natural snags and cavities, nest boxes can provide a necessary habitat component to assist local wildlife. In addition, while monitoring their boxes, outdoor enthusiasts are offered the opportunity to see wildlife at close range, and share the excitement of another of nature's wonders -- cavity nesting songbirds.

Pat Schlarbaum is a wildlife diversity technician for the department in Boone.



Don Poggensee

Daily "Dos" for Conservation

You don't have to be thrifty to slash your trash (okay, it helps). However, now, more than ever, the art of frugality is becoming an essential mindset to sensibly functioning within our homes, our businesses -- and our lives. While it challenges the creativeness in each of us, frugality also moves us toward a new-found responsibility -- reduce, reuse, recycle -- in other words, never waste a resource.

What follows are tips to help us rethink how to turn our wastes into resources, along with some thought-provoking quotations to remind us the job of caring for each other and for our planet shouldn't be left just to distant "experts." Rather, that responsibility lies within each of our daily actions and our response to the need for frugal waste practices.

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by Julie Kjolhede

Buy products in recyclable containers. Milk in a recyclable plastic jug costs the same as milk in a non-recyclable wax-paper carton. (TWG)

Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without. ***New England Proverb***

Buy concentrated products. (TWG)

The term "ecology" comes from the Greek word *oikos*, meaning "the household." Ecological responsibility, then, begins at home and expands to fill the entire planet. ***Jeremy Rifkin***

Buy bulk foods. A 25-pound sack of flour produces less packaging waste than 5 five-pound bags. (TWG)

B.Y.O.B. Bring Your Own Bags when you go shopping. Decline the "courtesy" bags store clerks automatically give you with each purchase of a single item. (TWG)

Did you know 25 to 35 percent of your trash can be composted? (Rainbow Industries) Call 515/281-8941 for a free backyard composting brochure.

The average home today contains more chemicals than were found in a typical chemistry lab at the turn of the century. ***Debra Lynn Dadd***

Buy nonhazardous products for use around the house. For a free list of safer alternative recipes for floor cleaners, furniture polishes, insect repellents and more, call 515/281-8941

Old kitchen cabinets: Reuse them in the garage or workshop -- or call 515/281-8941 for alternatives to landfilling construction items.

Reduce your incoming junk mail. The average American adult is on more than 50 mailing lists. For free instructions on how to remove your name from existing junk mail listings, call 515/281-8941.

Reuse bags, containers, paper, boxes and other items. Be creative in finding new ways to reuse materials! For example, old room deodorizers -- disassemble, soak inner absorbent pad with pine cleaner and reassemble. (TWG)

Let us all be inspired by the fact that each of us may bring about a small change, and that all of us together can make an enormous difference. ***Claes Nobel***

SURF'S UP! If you're on the Internet, check out these sources on composting, recycling and buying recycled products: RotWeb (http://www.net.indra.com/~topsoil/compost_menu.html) provides home composting information and teacher resources. The Compost Resource Page (http://www.oldgrowth.org/compost) has articles about composting and an interactive bulletin board for composting discussions. *The Iowa Recycling Directory* and *The Iowa Recycled Products Directory* (http://www.recycleiowa.org) page provides information and resources about recycling opportunities in your area.

Juice lids: Adhere a piece of magnetic tape to the back and a child's picture to the front. Or, parents could use this idea to rotate chores among family members. (TWG)

The sign of insanity is doing the same thing and expecting different results. ***Chinese Proverb***

Musty books: Place sheets of newspaper between some pages. Place the books along with crumpled newspaper in a box or suitcase. Newspaper absorbs the odor. Recycle the newspaper! (TWG)

What to do with those old inner tubes from bicycle tires? If you're creative, use the tubes to make rubber stamps. Slit the tube up the middle and lay flat. Draw and cut out simple designs. Glue the cutouts onto scrap wooden blocks. (TWG)

Must we always teach our children with books? Let them look at the mountains and the stars up above. Let them look at the beauty of the waters and the trees and flowers on earth. They will begin to think. And to think is the beginning of a real education. ***David Polis***

Bad photographs: The ones where someone had closed-eyes or a strange expression . . . use them to make all-occasion cards. Glue photo onto construction paper and add a funny caption. (TWG)

A broken umbrella: Use to make a poncho for a small child. Remove all the metal pieces. Cut a hole for the head. (TWG)

Do the hardest thing on earth for you. Act for yourself. Face the truth. ***Katherine Mansfield***

Dented ping-pong balls: Place in boiling water to "pop" the dent out. (TWG)

1996 fish awards

The following list includes the top 10 entries and released of each species taken in 1996.
Current state records are in **bold** type. An (*) indicates a new record this year.

weight/length	date	angler, hometown	location, county
Bass, Largemouth (Minimum -- 7 lbs. or 22 ")			
10 lbs 12 ozs 23.5"	**5/1984**	**Patricia Zaerr, Davenport**	**Lake Fisher, Davis**
8 lbs 8 ozs	4/16	Jerry D Petersen, Omaha, NE	Farm Pond,
8 lbs 4 ozs	1/13	Mark Cottrell, Kensett	Willets Quarry, Cerro Gordo
8 lbs 4 ozs	5/18	Arlie Vander Hoek, Pella	Rock Quarry, Marion
8 lbs 4 oz	7/14	Dan Patten, Earling	Farm Pond, Shelby
8 lbs	6/22	Richard Hill, Des Moines	Farm Pond, Ringgold
8 lbs	4/27	Josh Edwards, Cherokee	Farm Pond, Cherokee
7 lbs 15 ozs	5/1	Jeff Leonard, Harlan	Farm Pond, Shelby
7 lbs 12 ozs	4/27	Jebb D Jones, Red Oak	Farm Pond, Montgomery
7 lbs 10 ozs	5/	Chris Hamilton, Chariton	Lucas
7 lbs 10 ozs	9/14	Hiroyuki Hosoya, West Des Moines	Rathbun Lake,
RELEASED			
23"	4/10	Gary Maki, Newton	Lake Ponderosa,
22.25"	8/24	Rick Tegtmeir, Marion	Farm Pond, Jones
22.75"		Roger Ver Ploeg, Albia	Lake Miami, Monroe
22"	5/18	Scott J Carnes, Thurman	Old Taber Dump, Fremont
22.5"	7/7	Scott R Hart, Grimes	Farm Pond, Guthrie
22.125"	7/20	Shane T Kuehn, Papilion	Binder Lake, Adams
22"	5/28	Mark A Schilling, Somers	Gravel Pit, Webster
22.25"	4/7	Steve Walker, Red Oak	Pond, Montgomery
22"	7/13	Robert M Hawkins, Valley	West Okoboji, Dickinson
22.5"	5/26	Travis Paul, Red Oak	Farm Pond, Montgomery
22.5"	6/30	Dwight R Shelton, Marshalltown	Farm Pond, Marshall
Bass, Ocean-Striped (Minimum -- 5 lbs.)			
9 lbs 4 ozs 29"	**7/1983**	**Richard Pauley, Mystic**	**Lake Rathbun, Appanoose**
Bass, Rock (Minimum -- 1 lb.)			
1 lb 8 ozs 10.5"	**6/1973**	**Jim Driscoll, Dubuque**	**Mississippi River, Dubuque**

weight/length	date	angler, hometown	location, county
Bass, Smallmouth (Minimum -- 4 lbs. or 20")			
7 lbs 12 ozs 22.75"	**9/1990**	**Rick Gray, Dickinson**	**West Okoboji, Dickinson**
6 lbs 3 ozs	9/1	Lana Wanders, Pella	Farm Pond, Mahaska
5 lbs 15 ozs	8/23	Daniel Spengler, Ocheyedan	West Lake Okoboji, Dickinson
5 lbs	7/21	Matt Hasek, Cedar Rapids	Maquoketa River, Delaware
4 lbs 13 ozs	9/7	David H Rich, Sioux City	West Okoboji, Dickinson
4 lbs 12 ozs	7/30	Mike Magnussen, Shelton	West Okoboji, Dickinson
4 lbs 10 ozs	6/21	Greg Reiter, Cedar Falls	Cedar River, Black Hawk
4 lbs 8 ozs	10/20	Bob Schroeder, Postville	Maquoketa River, Delaware
4 lbs 8 ozs	7/28	Kent Magnussen, Estherville	West Lake
4 lbs 8 ozs	5/8	Vance Guinn, Spirit Lake	West Okoboji, Dickinson
4 lbs 8 ozs	5/4	Robb Lockey, Neola	Spirit Lake, Dickinson
RELEASED			
21.75"	9/14	Mark Mitchell, Estherville	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20.125"	9/1	Michael Creswell, Spencer	West Okoboji, Dickinson
22"	10/10	Sidney Schrum, Alta	West Okoboji Lake, Dickinson
20.5"		John Subbert, Des Moines	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20"	10/20	Bob Schroder, Postville	Maquoketa River, Delaware
20"	7/26	Jarod Synergaard, Sutherland	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20.5"	8/15	Rocky Thompson, Spirit Lake	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20"	6/9	Darcy Johnson, Ruthven	West Okoboji, Dickinson
Bass, White (Minimum -- 2.5 lbs.)			
3 lbs 14 ozs 20"	**5/1972**	**Bill Born, Milford**	**West Okoboji, Dickinson**
3 lbs 1 ozs	9/9	David Zaehringer, Muscatine	Mississippi River, Muscatine
3 lbs 1 ozs	3/14	Cleon Seedorf, Elma	Mississippi River, Allamakee
3 lbs	10/14	Lloyd Lindaman, Iowa Falls	Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo
3 lbs	4/27	Barry Andersen, Arnolds Park	Minnewashta, Dickinson
2 lbs 12 ozs	8/25	Amy Waterman, Peosta	Mississippi River, Clayton
2 lbs 11 ozs	5/8	Bill Ferns, Spirit Lake	East Okoboji, Dickinson
2 lbs 11 ozs	9/18	Doug Tomlinson, Oskaloosa	Lake Red Rock, Marion
2 lbs 11 ozs	5/96	Brent Wingfield, Spirit Lake	Spirit Lake, Dickinson
2 lbs 9 ozs	2/14	Wes Mahan,Sioux City	Missouri River, Woodbury
2 lbs 9 ozs	9/12	Charles Schneider, Sheldon	West Okoboji, Dickinson
2 lbs 9 ozs	10/6	Dan Putz, Dyersville	Mississippi River, Clayton
Bass, Wiper (Minimum -- 4 lbs.)			
17 lbs 5 ozs 30.5"	**11/1993**	**Joseph F Kafer, Des Moines**	**Des Moines River, Polk**
15 lbs 10 ozs	5/6	Lanny Caligiuri, Des Moines	Des Moines River, Polk
15 lbs 10 ozs		Richard Spurgin, Des Moines	Des Moines River, Polk
8 lbs 12 ozs	5/19	Todd Nelson, Plattsmouth	Des Moines River, Marion
7 lbs 6 ozs	7/2	Terry Davis, Melbourne	Des Moines River, Marion
7 lbs	4/15	Tammy Bailey, Eldon	Des Moines River, Wapello
7 lbs	1/13	Bryce Thompson, Des Moines	Des Moines River, Polk
6 lbs 12 ozs	5/1	Chris Rhinehart, Brooklyn	Holiday Lake, Poweshiek
4lbs 9oz	8/11	Kevin Rae, Davenport	Mississippi River, Scott
4 lbs 7 ozs	2/6	Brett Monteleone, Newton	Lake Red Rock, Marion
Bass, Yellow (Minimum -- .75 lbs.)			
1 lb 9 ozs 14.5"	**4/1991**	**Bill Campbell, Council Bluffs**	**Lake Manawa, Pottawattamie**

weight/length	date	angler, hometown	location, county
1 lb 6 ozs	4/10	Niel Batten, Council Bluffs	Manawa, Pottawattamie
1 lb 6 ozs	4/10	Thomas A Tews, Council Bluffs	Manawa, Pottawattamie
15 ozs		Darryl Lee Anderson, Palmer	Black Hawk, Sac
14 ozs	2/	Terry E Irwin, Lakeview	Black Hawk Lake, Sac
13 ozs	6/14	Larry Griff, Omaha, NE	Black Hawk Lake, Sac

Bluegill (Minimum -- 1 lb.)

3 lbs 2 ozs 12.75"	**7/1986**	**Phil Algreen, Earlham**	**Pond, Madison**
2lbs	10/5	Mike Galvin, Des Moines	Farm Pond, Clarke
2lbs	5/28	Scott Bunnell, Corydon	Farm Pond, Wayne
1 lb 13 ozs	5/21	Tria M Scott, Iowa City	Pond, Johnson
1 lb 9 ozs	6/11	Erik Knutsen, Greenfield	Farm Pond, Adair
1 lb 8 ozs	7/4	Larry Petersen, Atlantic	Rock Quarry, Cass
1 lb 8 ozs	4/27	Steven White, Bloomfield	Farm Pond, Davis
1 lb 8 ozs	6/12	Andrew Neuhaus, Shell Rock	Farm Pond, Butler
1 lb 6 oz	12/27	Margret Ryan, Walker	Farm Pond, Van Buren
1 lb 5 oz	5/4	Diane Navaholz, Cedar Falls	Farm Pond, Appanoose
1 lb 5 ozs	10/28	Harold E Marshall, Missouri Valley	Farm Pond, Harrison
1 lb 5 ozs	8/28	Lois Hottendorf, Denison	West Okoboji, Dickinson
1 lb 5 ozs	5/5	Nickolas A Fuller, Salem	Farm Pond, Henry
1 lb 5 ozs	5/4	Diane Nauholz, Cedar Falls	Farm Pond, Appanoose
1 lb 5 ozs	7/10	Max Seely, Spirit Lake	East Okoboji, Dickinson
1 lb 5 ozs	6/25	Gene Murray, Janesville	Thunderwoman Park, Black Hawk

Bowfin/Dogfish (Minimum -- 5 lbs.)

11 lbs 8 ozs 31"	**5/1989**	**Bill Gretten, Blue Grass**	**Mississippi River, Clayton**
7 lbs 12 oz	6/2	Joshua Peterka, Swisher	Mississippi River, Clayton
7 lbs 7 ozs	5/4	Brian Waterman, Peosta	Green Island, Jackson

Buffalo (Minimum -- 20 lbs.)

***56 lbs 48"**	**5/18/1996**	**Terry J Gann, McClelland**	**Manawa, Pottawattamie**
29 lbs 14 ozs	1/23	Jamie Hoover, Cedar Rapids	Coralville Reservoir, Johnson

Bullhead (Minimum -- 2.5 lbs.)

5 lbs 8 ozs 22"	**1989**	**Michael Hurd, Ellsworth**	**Farm Pond, Hamilton**
3 lbs 2 ozs	8/25	Lloyd Bedier, Ellston	Pond, Ringgold
2 lbs 8 ozs	6/26	Mary Benton,	Lake Anita, Cass

Carp (Minimum -- 25 lbs.)

50 lbs 44"	**5/1969**	**Fred Houghland, Glenwood**	**Glenwood Lake, Mills**
47 lbs	8/12	Donna Timmons, Prairie City	Farm Pond, Jasper
47 lbs	5/5	Curtis Wagner, Greenfield	Lake Greenfield, Adair
35 lbs 10 ozs	7/10	Jim Guilliatt, Jr, Lincoln	Spirit Lake, Dickinson
30 lbs 8 ozs	5/12	Don Walker, Burlington	Mississippi River, Des Moines
30 lbs 5 ozs	6/13	Robert Axtell, Muscatine	Sand Pit, Muscatine

Catfish, Blue (Minimum -- 20 lbs.)

62 lbs 42.5"	**9/1995**	**Darrell E Carter, Jefferson**	**Big Sioux River, Plymouth**

weight/length	date	angler, hometown	location, county
Catfish, Channel (Minimum -- 15 lbs.)			
36 lbs 8 ozs 40.5"	**8/1993**	**Ronald Godwin, Earlham**	**Middle Raccoon River, Dallas**
**37 lbs 14 ozs	9/21	Frank Beminio, Coralville	Iowa River, Johnson
16 lbs 4 ozs	7/27	Elmer Hawk, Bedford	Stream 102 River, Taylor
16 lbs 3 ozs	5/18	Jerry D Carlson, Tama	Diamond Lake, Poweshiek
15 lbs 12 ozs	3/18	William Kristian II, Cedar Rapids	Coralville Lake, Johnson
15 lbs 6 ozs	10/6	Chad Vanderhoof, Red Oak	Viking Lake, Montgomery
15 lbs 4 ozs	7/20	John Points, Council Bluffs	Little Sioux River, Harrison
15 lbs 4 ozs		Clarence Ward, Council Bluffs	Lake Manawa, Pottawattamie
15 lbs	6/4	Scott E Johnston, Indianola	Little River Lake, Decatur
Catfish, Flathead (Minimum -- 20 lbs.)			
81 lbs 52"	**6/1958**	**Joe Baze, Chariton**	**Lake Ellis, Lucas**
55 lbs 8 ozs	9/12	John Points, Council Bluffs	Little Sioux Spillway, Harrison
42 lbs 5 ozs	5/15	Mike Ballard, Altoona	Hawkeye Park Pond, Polk
36 lbs 6 ozs	8/24	Michael Bell, Coralville	Iowa River, Johnson
35 lbs 8 ozs	9/14	Sidney Simpson, Des Moines	Des Moines River, Polk
32 lbs 5 ozs		Troy Hansen, Oxford	Iowa River
32 lbs	7/1	Irene Mischke, Jefferson	Raccoon River, Greene
30 lbs 1 ozs	11/20	Robert A G Williams, Bellevue	Lake Manawa, Pottawattamie
30 lbs	7/5	Michael C Miller, Farmington	Des Moines River, Van Buren
29 lbs 8 ozs		Gary L Wangberg, Crescent	Missouri River, Pottawattamie
29 lbs	8/26	Robert Coleman, Iowa City	Iowa River, Johnson
29 lbs	7/28	Daniel Putbrese, Waterloo	Cedar, Black Hawk
Crappie (Minimum -- 2 lbs.)			
4 lbs 9 ozs 21.25"	**5/1981**	**Ted Trowbridge, Marshalltown**	**Green Castle Lake, Marshall**
4 lbs 2 oz	12/28	Harold E Walter, Prescott	Farm Pond, Adams
3 lbs	4/21	Keith Mc Carville, De Witt	Farm Pond, Clinton
2 lbs 14 ozs	5/17	Leo Scott, Omaha, NE	Farm Pond, Adams
2 lbs 10 ozs	6/9	Charles Williamson, Omaha, NE	Lake Anita, Cass
2 lbs 10 ozs	1/16	James Cooper, Paullina	Mill Creek, O'Brien
2 lbs 9 ozs	12/23	Roger Ambrose, Marion	Coralville Lake, Johnson
2 lbs 9 ozs	6/2	Stephen J Olmstead, Britt	Gravel Pits, Hancock
2 lbs 7 ozs	8/9	Michail Miner, Blairstown	Hannon Lake, Benton
2 lbs 6 ozs	8/20	Trent Donnelley, Stuart	Farm Pond, Adair
2 lbs 6 ozs	4/18	Donald Wilson, Atlantic	Lake Anita, Cass
2 lbs 6 ozs	9/14	Jennifer Bredensteiner, Farragut	Farm Pond, Fremont
Freshwater Drum (Minimum -- 15 lbs.)			
46 lbs 38.5"	**10/1962**	**R F Farra, Clarion**	**Spirit Lake, Dickinson**
19lbs	9/3	Robert Coleman, Iowa City	Mississippi River, Clayton
18 lbs 8 ozs	6/25	Rovert Hansen, Lansing	Mississippi River, Allamakee
18 lbs 6 ozs	7/14	Tara Hamel, Dubuque	
15 lbs 6 ozs	9/19	Lawrence Guyer, Garnavillo	Mississippi River,
Gar, Longnose (Minimum -- 6 lbs.)			
17 lbs 8 ozs 51"	**9/1992**	**Kevin Riley, Cedar Rapids**	**Mississippi River, Clayton**
15 lbs 6 ozs	9/19	Laurence Guyer, Garnavillo	Mississippi River

weight/length	date	angler, hometown	location, county
Gar, Shortnose (Minimum -- 2 lbs.)			
***4 lbs 7 ozs**	**2/25/1996**	**Mark Lindeman, Dysart**	**Des Moines River, Marion**
Goldeneye/Mooneye (Minimum -- 1.25 lbs.)			
2 lbs 4 ozs	**4/1992**	**Mark Ekle, Farmington**	**Des Moines River, Van Buren**
Muskellunge (Minimum -- 15 lbs. or 40")			
45 lbs 9 ozs 52"	**9/1995**	**Jerry L Curry, Mitchellville**	**Spirit Lake, Dickinson**
36 lbs 8 ozs	7/17	Gordon Hansch, Spirit Lake	Dickinson
36 lbs 8 ozs	6/8	Don Norton, Sanborn	West Okoboji, Dickinson
34 lbs 7 ozs	9/2	Dave Ries, Pocahontas	Big Spirit, Dickinson
34 lbs 5 ozs	9/12	Pete Staab, Rensen	West Okoboji, Dickinson
32 lbs 12 ozs	10/13	Eugene Berhow, Stanhope	West Okoboji, Dickinson
26 lbs 4 ozs	8/18	Jesse Fitz, Iowa Falls	West Okoboji, Dickinson
22 lbs 3 ozs	9/24	Gene Christiansen, Arnolds Park	West Okoboji, Dickinson
21 lbs 4 ozs	5/18	Dan Kuhlman, Des Moines	Big Creek, Polk
20 lbs 15 ozs	10/24	Rod Hawkins, Arnolds Park	West Okoboji, Dickinson
RELEASED			
52"	10/11	Frank Staskiewicz Jr, Springfield, NE	West Okoboji, Dickinson
51"	8/11	Mark Mitchell, Estherville	Big Spirit, Dickinson
51.5"	9/3	Dick Crail, Algona	West Okoboji, Dickinson
47"	9/14	Dennis Larson, Spencer	West Okoboji, Dickinson
46"		Eric M Kennedy, Gretna	West Okooboji, Dickinson
45"	9/2	Dale Witt, Spencer	Spirit Lake, Dickinson
Muskellunge, Tiger (Minimum -- 15 lbs. or 40")			
27 lbs 2 ozs 47"	**8/1989**	**Shannon Green, Spencer**	**Spirit Lake, Dickinson**
Northern Pike (Minimum -- 10 lbs. or 34")			
25 lbs 5 ozs 45"	**2/1977**	**Allen Forsberg, Albert City**	**West Okoboji, Dickinson**
24 lbs	6/5	Scott Knutson, Mason City	Gravel Pit, Worth
18 lbs 2ozs		Sandra McGrath, Eagle Grove	Iowa River, Wright
16 lbs 6 ozs	4/8	Zack Larsen, Spencer	Lost Island, Clay
15 lbs 11 ozs	5/25	Troy Bare, Sutherland	Big Spirit Lake, Dickinson
15 lbs 8 ozs	3/5	Tami Tungland, Lakefield	Minnewashta, Dickinson
14 lbs	7/13	Bill Kono, Waterloo	Wapsipinicon River, Buchanan
13 lbs 8 ozs	7/13	Michael Herrmann, Urbandale	Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo
13 lbs 8 ozs	9/2	Robert Coleman, Iowa City	Mississippi River, Clayton
13 lbs 5 ozs	5/11	Dale Elbert, Garner	Leland Pits, Winnebago
13 lbs 4 ozs	1/16	Ralph Lansing, Perry	Spirit Lake, Dickinson
13 lbs 4 ozs	5/12	Don Syhlman, Dike	Cedar River, Black Hawk
RELEASED			
45"	9/2	Dale Witt, Spencer	Spirit Lake, Dickinson
41"	5/25	Troy Bare, Sutherland	Spirit Lake, Dickinson
39"	11/22	William O Sass, Waterloo	Cedar River, Black Hawk
39"	8/15	Richard Rhinehart, Brooklyn	Diamond Lake, Ponderosa
36.5"	6/22	Tony Belken, Spencer	Lost Island, Palo Alto
36"	7/13	Dean Messerly, Steamboat Rock	Cedar River, Black Hawk
34"	4/15	Ken B Krier, Carroll	Cedar River, Black Hawk

weight/length	date	angler, hometown	location, county
Northern Pike (continued)			
35"	9/21	Scott Soyer, Antioch	West Okoboji, Dickinson
42"	8/21	Mark Mitchell, Estherville	Big Spirit, Dickinson
34"	10/16	Carmie Lovelace, Coralville	Maquoketa River, Delaware
34"	10/05	Dale Witt, Spencer	West Okoboji
Paddlefish (Minimum -- 25 lbs.)			
107 lbs 69.5"	**3/1981**	**Robert Pranshke, Onawa**	**Missouri River, Monona**
64lbs	8/17	John Points, Council Bluffs	Little Sioux Spillway, Harrison
Perch, Yellow (Minimum -- 1 lb.)			
2 lbs 3 ozs 14.75"	**3/1994**	**Daniel Borchardt, Mason Ctiy**	**Morse Lake, Wright**
2 lbs 1 oz	1/30	Rick L Postier, Carlisle	Moffit Reservoir, Polk
1 lb 15 ozs		Gayle Ruthart, Lehigh	Farm Pond, Palo Alto
1 lb 15 ozs	2/03	Kris Krie, Spencer	Silver Lake, Palo Alto
1 lb 12 ozs	2/18	Pat Dunn, Aurelia	Silver Lake, Palo Alto
1 lb 12 ozs	2/10	Brock Norton, Hartley	Silver Lake, Palo Alto
1 lb 11 ozs	5/12	Tom Holm, Fort Dodge	Big Bear Pond, Webster
1 lb 10 ozs	9/14	Jerry Marquardt, Norfolk, NE	Silver Lake, Palo Alto
1 lb 9 ozs	1/6	Shane Akin, Arnolds Parks	Silver Lake, Palo Alto
1 lb 9 ozs	1/11	Steve Swenson, Pomeroy	Silver Lake, Palo Alto
1 lb 9 ozs	2/8	Cecil Loof, Ocheyedan	Spirit Lake, Dickinson
1 lb 9 ozs		Bill Ries, Pocahontas	Silver Lake, Palo Alto
1 lb 9 ozs	1/21	Bill Whitney, Emmetsburg	Silver Lake, Palo Alto
1 lb 9 ozs	3/17	Paul Kinnetz, Spencer	Silver Lake, Palo Alto
1 lb 9 ozs	5/30	Chad Husman, Aurelia	Silver Lake, Clay
Sauger, (Minimum -- 2.5 lbs. or 18")			
6 lbs. 8 ozs 25"	**10/1976**	**Mrs W Buser, Sloan**	**Missouri River, Woodbury**
5 lbs 1 oz	3/15	Tim Matsko, Streator	Mississippi River, Clinton
5 lbs	8/14	Sharon Skriver, Iowa City	Iowa River, Johnson
4 lbs 11 ozs	3/11	Chuck Stokes, Dubuque	Mississippi River, Dubuque
4 lbs 8 ozs	3/	Dan C Crow, Cedar Rapids	Mississippi River, Jackson
4 lbs 6 ozs	4/3	Bob Brown, Dubuque	Mississippi River, Clayton
3 lbs 14 ozs	10/10	Richard Kieffer, Dubuque	Mississippi River, Dubuque
3 lbs 10 ozs	2/22	Jack Machacek, Central City	Mississippi River, Clayton
3 lbs 8 ozs	3/12	Randy Schoon, Anamosa	Mississippi River, Clayton
3 lbs 6 ozs	6/24	Maury Glesne, Elkader	Mississippi River, Allamakee
3 lbs 6 ozs	3/22	Scott Kinkead, Central City	Mississippi River, Clayton
RELEASED			
19.75"	8/6	Bob Dupont, Dubuque	Mississippi River, Clayton
21"	6/9	David G Larson, Wyoming	Mississippi River, Jackson
21"	4/21	Robert Coleman, Iowa City	Iowa River, Johnson
19.5	7/13	Dennis M Jansen, Dubuque	Mississippi River, Dubuque
18.25"		Nancy Dooley, Peosta	Mississippi River, Allamakee
18.5"	3/10	Mike Hansen, Cedar Falls	Mississippi River, Jackson
Saugeye, (Minimum -- 6 lbs. or 25")			
***9 lbs 2 ozs 27"**	**4/1/1996**	**Mike McGilligan, Webster City**	**Des Moines River, Polk**
6 lbs 2 ozs	1/15	Matthew S Lovelace, Coralville	Iowa River, Johnson

weight/length	date	angler, hometown	location, county
Sturgeon, Shovelnose (Minimum -- 3 lbs.)			
12 lbs 33"	**4/1974**	**Randy Hemm, Douds**	**Des Moines River, Van Buren**
Sucker (Minimum -- 4 lbs.)			
15 lbs 1 oz 32.25"	**9/1983**	**Glen E Dittman, Onawa**	**Missouri River, Monona**
7 lbs 12 ozs	4/24	Douglas Lee Peet, Cedar Rapids	Cedar River, Linn
6 lbs	4/28	Nathan Schon, Waukon	Upper Iowa River, Allamakee
4 lbs 7 ozs	4/28	David Schon, Waukon	Upper Iowa River, Allamakee
Sunfish (Minimum -- 1 lb.)			
1 lb 13 ozs 10.25"	**9/1967**	**Dale Cornick, Burlington**	**Lake Geode, Henry**
1 lbs 6 ozs	5/25	Janet Bryant, Staton	Viking Lake, Montgomery
1 lb 4 ozs	7/14	Steven P Anderson, Ainsworth	Farm Pond, Washington
Trout, Brook (Minimum -- 1 lb. or 13")			
***7 lbs 19.75"**	**7/1996**	**Doug Kovarik, Marion**	**Fountain Springs, Delaware**
3 lbs 14 ozs	6/4	P J Tentinger, Waterloo	Glovers Creek, Fayette
2 lbs 8 ozs	5/9	Chet Bachman, Monona	Glovers Creek, Fayette
1 lbs 11 ozs	5/7	Steve Goltz, Monona	Hickory Creek, Allamakee
1 lbs 9 ozs	5/24	Michael Hansen, Lansing	French Creek, Allamakee
1 lbs 8 ozs	6/7	Dave Solem, Decorah	Upper Iowa River, Linn
RELEASED			
16.25"	4/26	John R Meyer, Wyoming	Brush Creek, Fayette
15"	6/4	Daniel D Derhammer, Cedar Rapids	Richmond Spring,
13.5"	4/13	Andrew Kemmerer, Dewar	French Creek, Allamakee
Trout, Brown (Minimum -- 3 lbs. or 18")			
15 lbs 6 ozs 29"	**6/1995**	**Gerold Lewis, Gladbrook**	**North Prairie Lake, Black Hawk**
11 lbs 7 ozs	5/24	Gary Vonderohe, New Albia	French Creek, Allamakee
11 lbs 3 ozs	7/27	Neal VanErvelde, Grinnel	Turkey River, Clayton
10 lbs 12 ozs	5/13	Brian Bunn, Des Moines	North Bear Stream,
7 lbs 5 ozs	5/8	Kelly P Beacom, Westgate	Granis Creek, Fayette
6 lbs 5 ozs	8/12	Brian Langel, Oelwein	Fountain Springs, Delaware
6 lbs 14 ozs	8/2	Karl L Behning, Dubuque	Yellow River, Allamakee
6 lbs 12 ozs	5/16	Mark Zelinskas, Dubuque	Upper Swiss, Dubuque
6 lbs 10 ozs		Arnold Kaufmann, Dubuque	Dalton Lake, Dubuque
5 lbs 12 ozs	12/21	Yunfei Chen, Ames	North Prairie Lake, Black Hawk
5 lbs 10 ozs		Bill Sholes, Dorchester	South Bear, Allamakee
RELEASED			
20"	8/24	Dale Huskey,West Des Moines	Waterloo Creek, Allamakee
22.75"	4/10	Todd M Neal,Mount Vernon	Bloody Run, Clayton
20.5"	7/5	Tim Conrad, Dyersville	Bankston, Dubuque
Trout, Rainbow (Minimum -- 3 lbs. or 18")			
19 lbs 8 ozs 35"	**7/1984**	**Jack Renner, Waterloo**	**French Creek, Allamakee**
13 lbs 8 ozs	7/29	Nick Decker, Evansdale	Wexford Creek,
12 lbs 13 ozs	6/4	Mike Amundson, Waterloo	Otter Creek, Fayette
12 lbs 7 ozs	6/26	Bob Kerksieck, Ames	Maquoketa River, Delaware
12 lbs 6 ozs	8/10	Todd Ruden, Iowa City	Trout Run,Winneshiek

weight/length	date	angler, hometown	location, county
Trout, Rainbow (continued)			
12 lbs 4 ozs	5/	Dean McNally, Winona, MN	North Bear, Winneshiek
12 lbs	7/3	P J Tentinger, Waterloo	French Creek, Allamakee
11 lbs 14 ozs	6/16	Martin P Kies, Cedar Rapids	Fountain Springs, Delaware
11 lbs 12 ozs	5/3	Chris Heying, New Hampton	Trout Run, Winneshiek
11 lbs 6 ozs	6/3	Gerald Seabaugh, Macomb, IL	Fountain Spring, Delaware
11 lbs	6/26	Dennis Myhre, Decorah	Trout River, Winneshiek
11 lbs	2/16	Darrell E Wiley Jr, Farley	North Bear Creek, Winneshiek
RELEASED			
26"	7/31	Aaron Holthaus, Fredericksburg	Glovers, Fayette
18.5"	5/2	Joe Connely, Omaha, NE	Bloody Run, Allamakee
18.5	4/5	Josh Decker, Evansdale	Silver Creek, Allamakee
25.5	7/1	Richard A Heisterkamp, Carroll	French Creek, Allamakee
Walleye (Minimum -- 8 lbs. or 28")			
14 lbs 8 ozs 30.5"	**9/1986**	**Gloria Eoriatti, Ankeny**	**Des Moines River, Polk**
12 lbs 8 ozs	4/3	Curt Doocy, Cedar Falls	Shell Rock River, Black Hawk
12 lbs 2 ozs	2/28	Matt Walker, Prairieburg	Mississippi River, Clayton
11 lbs 3 ozs	2/30	Mike Sanford, Fort Madison	Mississippi River Pool 20, Lee
11 lbs 2 ozs	10/4	Richard O Grove, Boone	Des Moines River, Boone
11 lbs	12/12	Gerald Hopson, New London	Mississippi River, Des Moines
11 lbs	12/21	Keith A Brecht, Olin	Wapsipinicon, Jones
11 lbs	2/25	Cory Snyder, Halbur	Black Hawk Lake, Sac
10 lbs 14 ozs	5/19	Don Davis, Ionia	Cedar River, Chickasaw
10 lbs 11 ozs	4/	Mitch Baschke, Spencer	Little Sioux River, Clay
10 lbs 8 ozs	1/21	Randy Johnson, Dubuque	Mississippi River, Dubuque
10 lbs 8 ozs	3/4	Roger Knapp, Central City	Mississippi River, Clayton
10 lbs 5 ozs	5/21	Dale W Brandt, Spencer	Big Spirit, Dickinson
RELEASED			
28.25"	10/3	Bill Ginter, Dubuque	Mississippi River, Jackson
29.25"	10/8	Mark Mitchell, Estherville	West Okoboji, Dickinson
29"	5/25	Scott Carstensen, Spencer	West Okoboji, Dickinson
29.75"	8/20	Jim Evans, Waukon	Mississippi River, Allamakee
29.5	3/19	Doug Fuller, Swisher	Mississippi River, Clayton
28.75"	5/4	Dan Hauser, Sioux City	West Okoboji, Dickinson
White Amur (Minimum -- 25 lbs.)			
***53 lbs 48"**	**5/22/1996**	**A Benton & W Gettler Jr, Bridgewater**	**Lake Greenfield, Adair**
49 lbs 14 ozs	5/30	Chuck Cox, De Witt	Lake Kildeer, Clinton
49 lbs 8 ozs	6/17	Everett Freese, De Witt	Killdeer, Clinton
47 lbs	5/5	Curtis Wagner, Greenfield	Lake Greenfield, Adair
41 lbs	5/25	Jeff Powell, Casey	Meadow Lake, Adair
36 lbs 4 ozs	9/15	Teri Loftus, Omaha, NE	Lake Anita, Cass
35 lbs	3/27	Keith A Brecht, Olin	Farm Pond, Jones
30 lbs 8 ozs	5/12	Don Walker, Burlington	Mississippi River, Des Moines
25 lbs	3/28	Ken Schmidt, Barnum	Arrowhead, Sac

** Indicates a record not officially verified.

A frozen juice can lid: Keep one in your bicycle tool kit. Use it to place under your kick-stand when you park in a sandy area. (TWG)

Make your solid waste preferences known to politicians and community leaders. Encourage your community to establish and promote organics and backyard composting programs, curbside recycling and business recycling. Encourage community leaders to undertake a full cost accounting of solid waste services and inquire about unit-based pricing programs. For more information, call 515/281-8941.

We must be the change we see in the world. *Mohandas K. Gandhi*

What to do with empty match folders? Make into sewing kits for traveling. Pins and needles can be stuck into the bottom fold. Various colors of thread can be wrapped around the back of the folder. (TWG)

We travel together, passengers on a little spacecraft, dependent on its vulnerable supplies of air and soil . . . preserved from annihilation only the care, the work, and I will say the love, we give our fragile craft. *Adlai Stevenson*

Milk jugs make great berry picking baskets! Cut the top off a gallon-size jug, put a strip of rope or cloth through the handle and tie it around your waist. Also works to carry clothes pins or nails. Recycle the jugs when you're done! (TWG)

Instead of driving, at least once a week, make it your new habit to walk, bike, roller-blade . . .

Celebrate National Earth Day April 22, 1997. For information on resources and networking for National Earth Day, call 1-603-924-7720.

Once a day, change the world. A Real Life

Margarine tub lids: Make playing card holders for children. Place two lids with flat sides together. Staple together in the center and place a sticker over the staples. (TWG)

Lawn mower no longer repairable? Remove and recycle the engine with a salvage dealer. Bolt a board to the lawn mower's base and use for carting heavy items around the yard. (TWG)

Spring cleaning your basement and garage? There may be a Toxic Clean-up Day (TCD) event in your county this spring. Call 515/281-8941 to learn of TCD events or to request free, useful tips on reusing, recycling and safely disposing of usable and unusable paints, pesticides, motor oil and household batteries.

Reduce. Reuse. Recycle. Rethink. Respond.

Sources:

(TWG): *The Tightwad Gazette II: Promoting Thrift as a Viable Alternative Lifestyle*, Amy Dacyczyn, Copyright 1995, Villard Books.

A Real Life ™: A Reminder of How Good Life Can Be; bimonthly publication by A Real Life Inc., 245 Eighth Avenue, Box 400 New York, NY 10011.

Backyard Composting Guide, Rainbow Industries, Inc., Rott Wheeler, 201-575-8383.

The Green Lifestyle Handbook, Jeremy Rifkin, Editor, Henry Holt & Company, 115 West 18th Street, New York, NY 10011.

Fairport Fish Hatchery

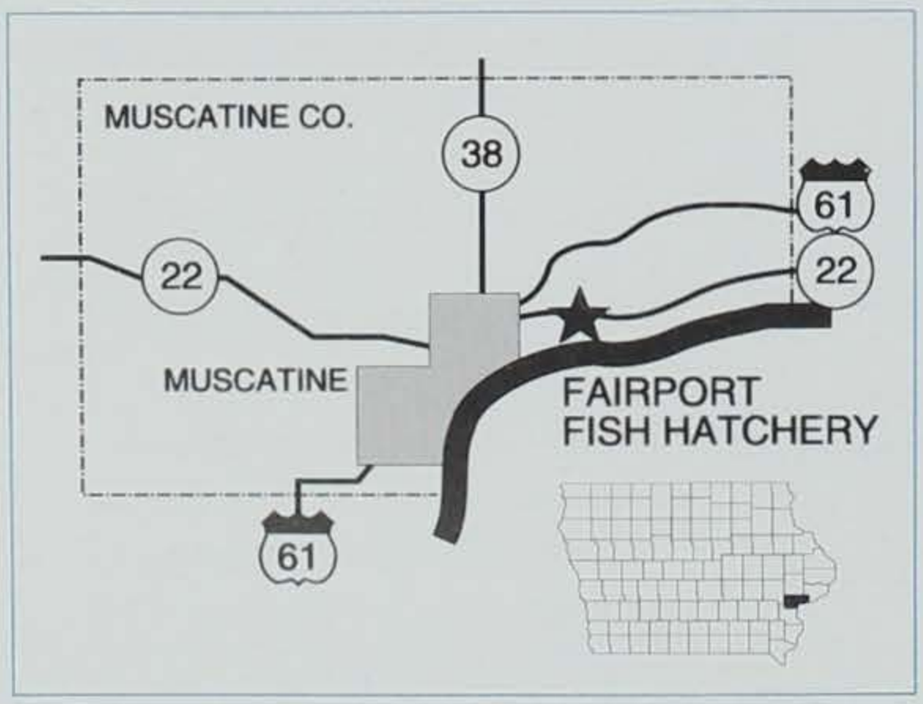
Prisoner of War Camp?

by Ken Snyder

World War II was raging in Europe and Asia and many of the United States men were off fighting for their country. This had caused a labor shortage in many of parts of the United States, and Muscatine was no different. The H. J. Heinz plant in Muscatine produced food for the Armed Services and was having problems finding laborers. A Sept. 1, 1943 article in the *Muscatine Journal* stated that because of the rapidly ripening tomato crop, 200 more men and 300 more women were needed to fill two "victory shifts" at the Heinz plant. They were asking "housewives, students over 16, rural residents and others who are employed regularly in other industries and wish to aid the war effort" to come in and work any time they could. By 1945 H. J. Heinz could no longer find enough local workers to process tomatoes and other foods.

Prisoners of war (POWs) had been used since 1943 to fill labor shortages in other parts of the country and even in Muscatine County. In 1943, Italian POWs were used to detassle corn in the West Liberty area and in 1944 POWs were used at Wapello in a sweet corn canning plant. In early 1945, officials of H.J. Heinz filed a request with the War Manpower Commission to use POW laborers in the Muscatine plant. With the request and subsequent approval, a little-known part of the history of the Fairport Fish Hatchery began.

A place was needed to house the POWs. The Fairport Fish Hatchery, at that time a federal fish hatchery, located nine miles east of Muscatine, was selected. The hatchery had been in existence since the early 1900s, first as a freshwater mussel research station and then as a fish hatchery. An empty, two-story building previously used as a research laboratory, was converted to a barracks to house the POWs and an eight-foot-high barbed-wire fence was constructed around the compound. Lt. Stephen V. Cope of the U. S. Army, who was the camp commander, arrived several days prior to the arrival of the POWs and explained regulations and safeguards to various groups in the area. This was to allay any fears about having POWs in the area and to assure the prisoners were treated fairly and humanely.



■ **(Right) 1920s photo of the Fairport Fish Hatchery**

Camp Muscatine, the official name, was a branch of a base camp at Algona. On April 6, 1945, the first 85 POWs arrived.

Between April and November 1945, 85 to 310 prisoners were housed at Fairport. Twelve to 15 military personnel were used to guard the compound at Fairport and to accompany the prisoners on work details. The following excerpt, published in the German POW newspaper, *Drahtpost*, is a translation of one POW Hans Hanus' comments about his transfer.

"On 6 April 1945, 85 German comrades departed the base camp at Algona with great anticipation and journeyed 270 miles southeast to the Mississippi River to open a new branch camp in the neighborhood of Muscatine, Iowa. After an exhausting 10-hour truck ride, we were happy to leave wintry Algona and land in Muscatine.

The first impression of our new camp made our hearts beat faster. Spring awaited us with a beautiful luxuriance of flowers. We felt a tingling of joy. Our expectations were further exceeded with the camp itself -- real two-story brick building, surrounded by a beautiful lawn, blossoming trees and bushes, and numerous fish ponds. The building is a former Fish Research Institute situated 200 meters from the Mississippi River. Because it has been vacant five years, we found it in deplorable condition. With German thoroughness, we immediately went to work and within a day we had our villa, from top to bottom, completely cleaned of rubbish.

We have two work projects. The first group is assigned to work in the preserve works processing cucumbers,

J. B. Southwall

horseradishes, beans and tomatoes. The second group will work in the tomato fields.

Despite our short time here, we also have sports. Currently table tennis is in fashion. Last Sunday was our first table tennis tournament for the very useful prize of donated tobacco products. Between two of the fish ponds a soccer field was set up on the lawn. The dust-free field heightens the joy essential to play. During the summer, bathing in one of the fish ponds will be available.

After the many to-and-fro days in Algona, we are all content to have landed in Muscatine. The men in Muscatine send greetings to all our comrades in Algona with best wishes for the future."

Iowa's Oldest New Fish Hatchery

Last year, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources obtained the Fairport Fish Hatchery on the Mississippi River near Muscatine. Although the Iowa DNR has been operating the hatchery since July 1, 1973, the Fish and Wildlife Service retained the property. At a ceremony on Sept. 27, 1996, ownership of this "new" hatchery was officially transferred from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to the Iowa DNR.

The Fairport Fish Hatchery was established in 1908 by an act of Congress. Station operations included research and production of mussels to restore shellfish populations in the Mississippi River to support the commercially important pearl button industry. Station activities shifted from shellfish to fin fish by the 1930s as the hatchery moved its operations entirely into fish production. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service operated the hatchery until its operation was transferred to the State of Iowa.

The Fairport Fish Hatchery produces largemouth bass, northern pike, walleye, saugeye, bluegill, channel catfish and white amur (grass carp) for stocking in Iowa waters.

The POWs were handled in strict accordance with the Geneva Convention of 1939 which stated that POWs be treated in a humane manner. By treating German POWs humanely, Americans hoped United States POWs in Germany would also be treated in a like manner. POWs were required to be fed the same quality and quantity of food as was being fed to U. S. soldiers in basic training. Those prisoners who worked were also paid 10 cents per hour up to 80 cents per day in canteen coupons. They could use this money to buy items at a camp canteen. United States regulations required all prisoners to wear clothing with a large "PW" on the back to identify them as prisoners of war. And, although the prisoners were only paid 10 cents per hour, any employer who used POW labor was required to pay the U.S. government the prevailing rate of labor in their area.

Russ Howard of Muscatine and William Kebernik of Chicago were military guards at the camp at Fairport. According to them, the prisoners cooked all the meals for the guards and prisoners, and did all the laundry and cleaning. The guards were housed in a separate part of the same building. Besides working at the Heinz plant, prisoners also worked at a corn canning plant in Wapello and for area vegetable growers.

Both former guards say there were no bad feelings between the prisoners and the guards, and in fact they became friends with some of the prisoners. When Howard and his wife, Bernice, were married in the summer of 1945, the prisoners baked a wedding cake for them. They also received a handmade perpetual calendar from one of the prisoners.

Howard remembers one prisoner who could speak perfect English. This prisoner had lived in New York for several years. He went back to Germany to visit and was drafted into the German army.

The only major complaint from the prisoners was that as soon as the war ended in Europe, some of their privileges were taken away. Certain items such as beer and cigarettes could no longer be purchased in the canteen and the quality of the food was not as good. This happened for several reasons. After VE Day, German prisoners were technically no longer prisoners of war and not covered under the Geneva convention. Also, the atrocities that occurred in Europe to American prisoners became known and the war was causing shortages all over the U.S. Everybody was asked to cut back including the POW camps.

Most prisoners liked Muscatine and there were never any attempts to escape. According to regulations, prisoners were not supposed to fraternize with local workers and Howard states that the guards were not well liked by some of the local people because they discouraged this activity. Even though discouraged, friendships did develop. Some employees at the Heinz plant received handmade gifts from prisoners and corresponded with them after the war.

Though the war in Europe ended in May of 1945, POWs were still used in the Muscatine area for labor. There was still a labor shortage all over America and prisoners were used to fill the shortage. Also, the United States had more than 425,000 POWs in this country and it took over a year to return them all to their country of origin. The last POWs at Fairport were transported back to Algona in November 1945 after being housed at Fairport for only eight months.

In 1997, there is little to remind us of the fact the Fairport Fish Hatchery was ever used as a POW camp. The old laboratory was torn down in 1972 and no other physical evidence of the camp exists at the hatchery. If you dig deep enough you can find some old newspaper clippings about the POWs coming to Muscatine. And if you talk to people that lived and grew up around Muscatine during that time, they still talk about the Fairport Fish Hatchery, the Prisoner of War Camp.

Ken Snyder

■ **There were no bad feelings between the prisoners and the guards. In fact, when Russ Howard and his wife, Bernice, were married, the prisoners baked a wedding cake for them. They also received a handmade perpetual calendar from one of the prisoners.**

Ken Snyder is a fisheries technician for the department at the Fairport Fish Hatchery in Muscatine.

Spring "Turkey Fever"

Iowa Has The *Quality* Cure

The leaves and odors of autumn have long since passed and while most Iowans are still struggling through winter's doldrums, a hardy group of individuals (nearly 40,000 in 1996) are beginning to show the early signs of spring "turkey fever." As mid-April fast approaches, the fever spreads like wildfire and completely consumes their bodies and souls. Turkey fever embraces the entire nation, but for this febrile disease there is only one cure -- turkey season! Yet for Iowan's possessed by the fever's powerful force, the cure is different. It's different because of the *quality* of the cure that Iowan's receive.

Article by Dale L. Garner and Terry W. Little
Photos by Roger A. Hill

Annually, Iowa's turkey nimrods look forward to a quality hunting experience. While the term "quality" implies different things to different people, to the majority of Iowa's spring turkey hunters, quality means the opportunity to pursue gobblers in an uncrowded forest setting. Turkey hunters have consistently told the DNR (through surveys and informal contacts) that maintaining a quality hunting experience is more important to them than bagging a turkey. They want the space to pursue majestic gobblers without undue interference from other hunters. This philosophy has been firmly and repeatedly endorsed by the state chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation.

The DNR wildlife bureau has traditionally managed spring turkey hunting and turkey hunters to meet three objectives:

1. Maintain a quality spring turkey hunting experience by keeping interference between hunters to a minimum. We have generally defined acceptable hunting quality as the condition existing when two-thirds of spring hunters report they had a satisfactory hunting experience.

2. Allow everyone to hunt who wants to participate, recognizing not everyone may be able to hunt exactly where and when they want in order to meet the primary objective.

3. Allow interested hunters to obtain two licenses whenever possible.

These objectives are not based on biological impacts to the turkey resource, since spring turkey hunting does not impact future reproduction or population growth. They also do not address maintaining a particular level of hunter success. Normally, only about a third of spring turkey hunters take home a turkey in a given year and over-harvesting spring gobblers is nearly a biological impossibility. Rather, these objectives are designed to maintain a "quality" hunting experience by controlling the number of permits issued through various seasons and zones.

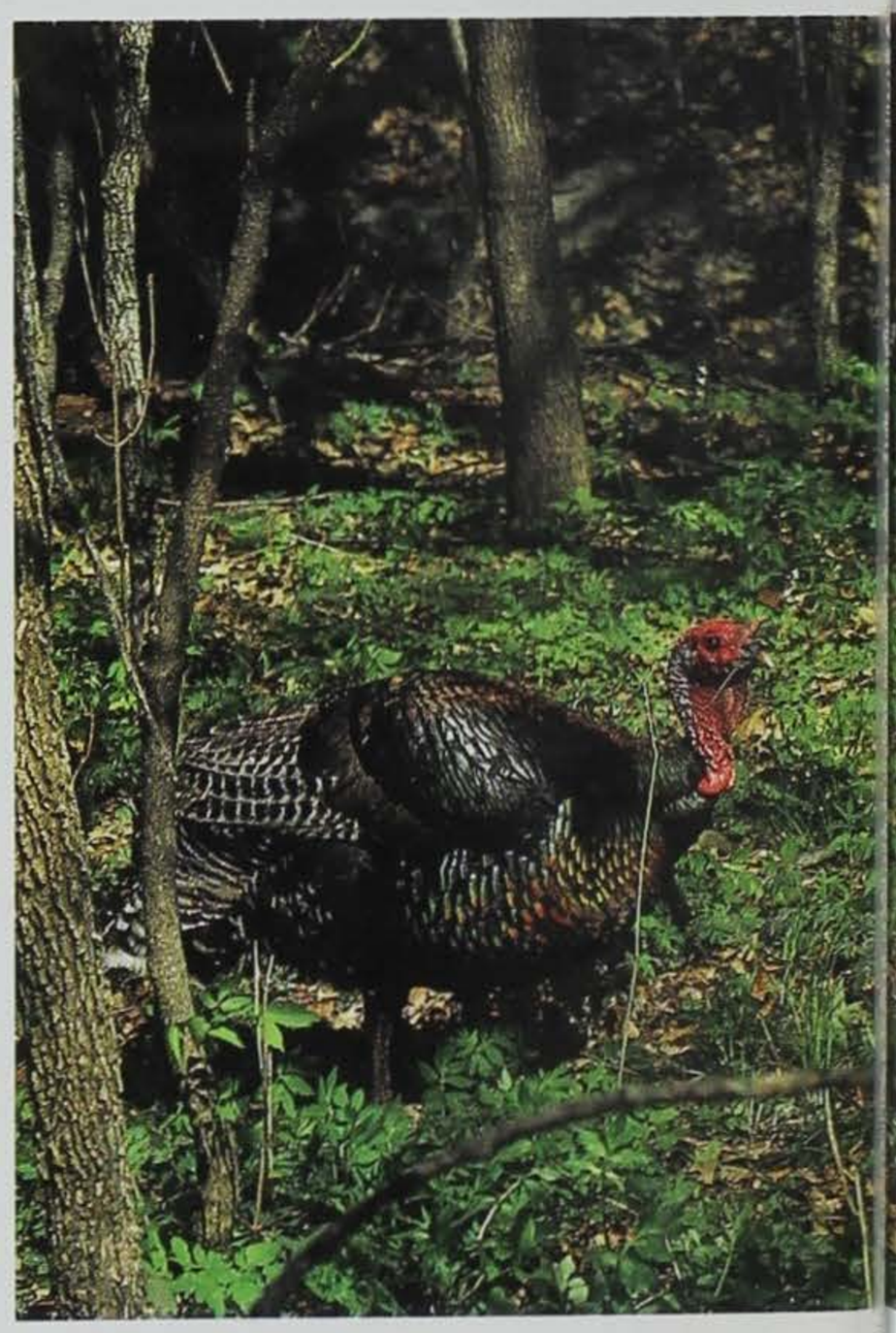
For two decades, the DNR has used a system of multiple seasons and zones to spread out hunters. Currently hunters may apply for a license in one of four seasons in four zones encompassing the entire state. Three state forest zones (Stephens, Shimek and Yellow River state forests) have restrictive license quotas in all four seasons. A fourth zone (Zone 4) including all of the rest of the state has restrictive license quotas in three seasons, but no license quota in the fourth season.

This system allows hunters concerned primarily with the amount of competition they may receive from other hunters to apply for one of the state forest zones or one of the first three seasons in Zone 4. They may have to go through a drawing to get one of these licenses, if the number of applications exceeds the quota. Or, they may have to accept a license in a zone or season that is not their first choice. Or, they may be drawn out completely. But if they draw a license they will be hunting with a controlled number of other hunters.

Hunters concerned primarily about getting a license and willing to face an uncertain amount of competition in the field may apply for Season 4 in Zone 4 and be guaranteed a license. There is no quota and no drawing.

To meet the third objective, hunters may receive two licenses as long as at least one of them is for Season 4 in Zone 4 (no license quota). They may purchase two licenses in any other season or zone only if licenses are available after every other hunter has had an opportunity to apply for them. These are combination licenses valid for hunting with shotgun, bow and arrow, or both. By purchasing the appropriate combination of licenses, a hunter could hunt with a gun or bow for as few as four days (first season) or up to 19 days in the third and fourth seasons, if licenses are available for the third season. About 5,000 hunters purchase two licenses each year.

Providing archers with a reasonable opportunity to bag a turkey while maintaining a quality hunt for all presents a special challenge. Several years ago, some archers asked for the opportunity to hunt for more days than gun hunters because their success rates



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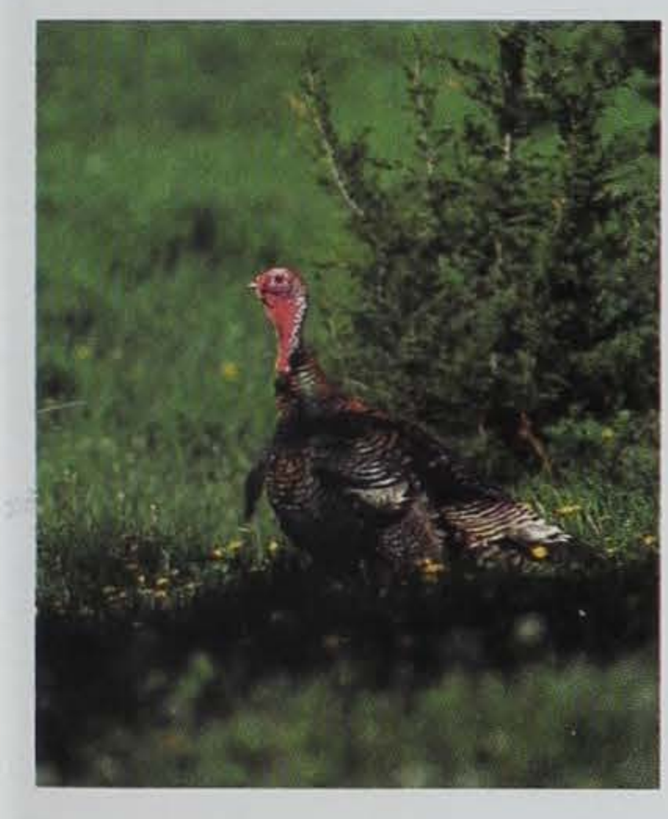
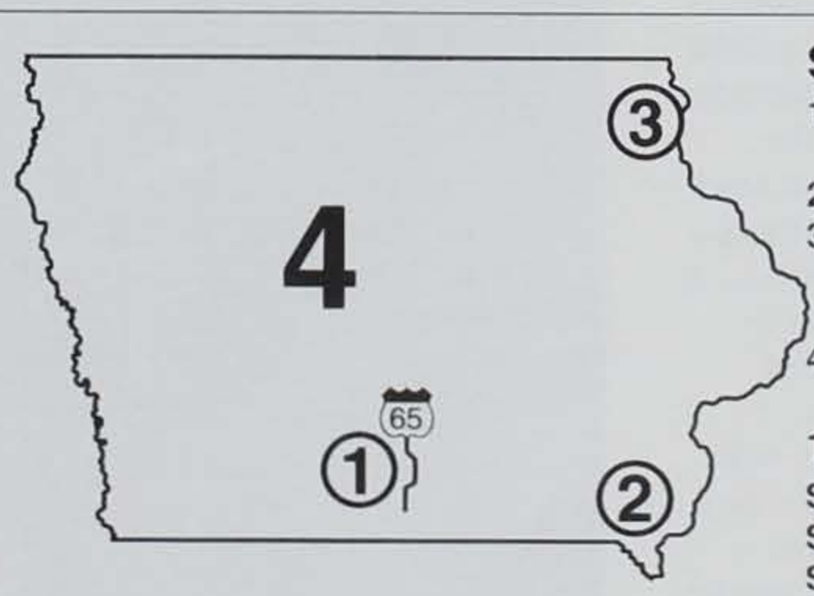




Spring Turkey Zones

1. Stephens Forest (Units West of Hwy 65)
2. Shimek Forest
3. Yellow River Forest (Units in Allamakee Co only)
4. Remainder of the state

1997 Seasons

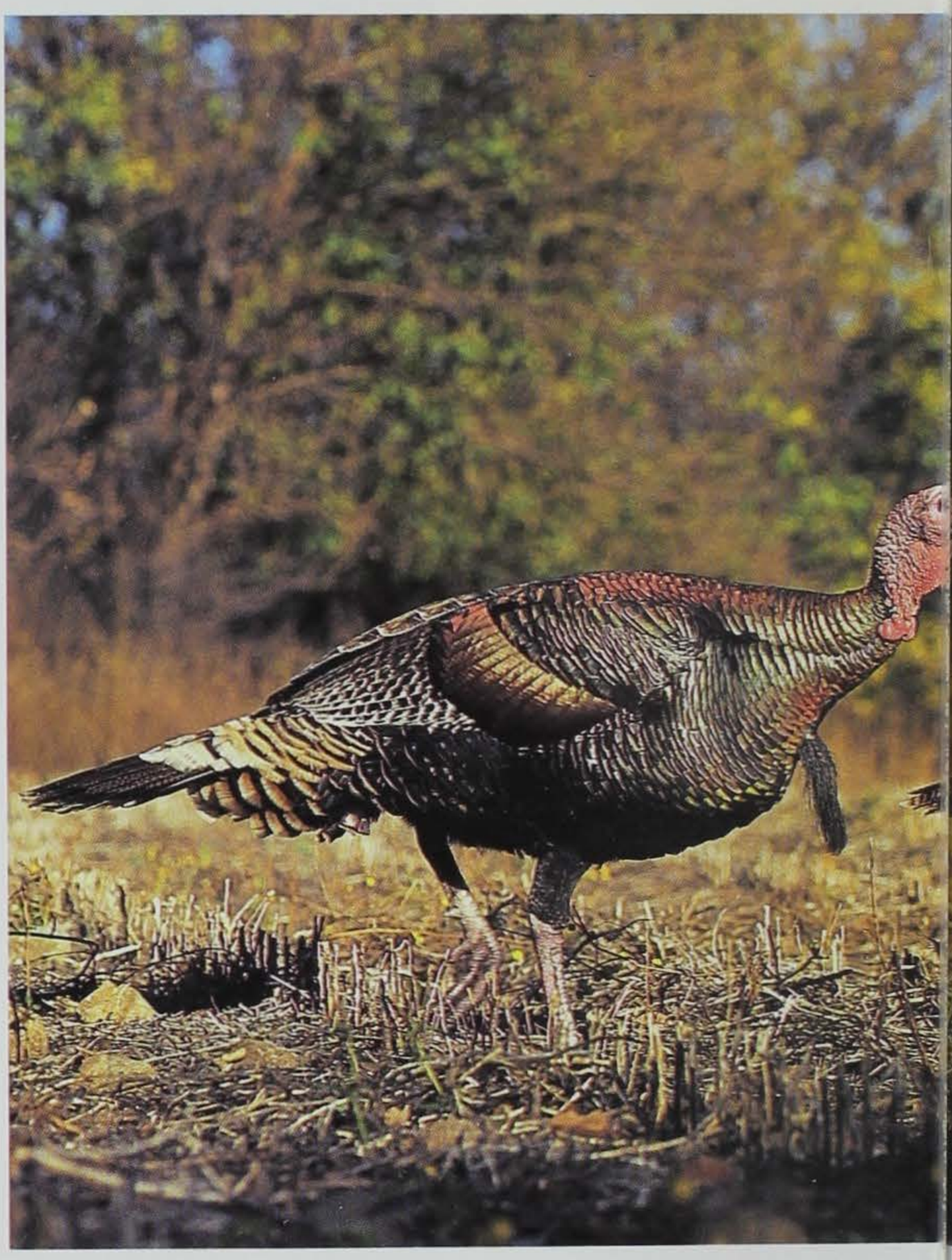
Season 1 -- April 14-17
Season 2 -- April 18-22
Season 3 -- April 23-29
Season 4 -- April 30 - May 11

are low (normally 10 percent or less, compared to 30 to 40 percent for gun hunters). Although license quotas have never been based on success rates, the number of spring turkey hunters was relatively low at that time and adequate space was available to accommodate bow hunters in more than one season. Since then, bow hunters have been allowed to purchase archery-only licenses good for all four seasons in any zone and with an unlimited quota. Unlike gun hunters, they do not have to worry about license quotas, do not have to go through a drawing, and can hunt exactly when and where they want. About 1,000 archers choose this option annually.

Since this gives purchasers of archery-only licenses some significant advantages over purchasers of combination gun/bow licenses, they have been restricted to just one license a year. Their alternative is to purchase up to two combination licenses; hunt with either a bow, gun or both; hunt up to 19 days (third and fourth seasons if licenses are available), and have the opportunity to bag two turkeys.

Landowners and tenants are eligible to receive a free spring turkey license valid for hunting on the land they own or farm in the season of their choice. There is no quota or drawing for free licenses. They may also purchase a paid hunting license, but they have to follow the same procedures as other turkey hunters to get the second license. (Purchase it for Season 4 in Zone 4, or wait until after the initial drawing to get a license in any other season/zone combination for which licenses are still available.)

While this system continues to work well into our third decade of spring turkey hunting, it cannot guarantee each and every hunter will always have the exact experience they desire. Individuals have different perceptions of what constitutes interference from other hunters. Some are



upset if they see another hunter walking into the woods on a property adjacent to where they will hunt. Others get upset only if they see another hunter scare away a gobbler they are working. And a host of tolerances exist between these extremes.

Selecting the patch of woods you will hunt can also affect your experience. About 20 percent of turkey hunters chose to hunt on public lands which make up just four percent of Iowa's turkey habitat; and most hunters hunt only on weekends. This results in hunter numbers that are three to five times higher on public than private lands, lower hunter success rates on public land, and much greater dissatisfaction with hunting quality. The three major state forests are zoned separately from other public lands because they represent a worst-case scenario if they are not regulated closely. These areas have developed campgrounds and provide other recreational opportunities that make them especially attractive to turkey hunters. Severe crowding problems have developed on all three forests in the past, so they are maintained as "special quality" hunting zones. License quotas are so low that hunters fortunate enough to draw a license can find gobbling toms and space to hunt free of other hunters.

In spite of these management efforts, a Saturday morning hunt on a public area can be a frustrating experience -- a hot gobbler can attract hunters from behind seemingly every tree! Experienced hunters avoid these hassles by hunting on private land where landowners generally control hunter access. Others hunt public areas only during the week or in the afternoons.

In the past, Iowa's system of multiple seasons and zones has provided turkey hunters with the safe, high-quality experience they desire. Hunter numbers have increased dramatically in the last five years, however, and competition for space to hunt has increased as well. While some public areas can be very crowded, few resemble the run and shoot "free-for-all" that can typify weekend turkey hunting in states where hunter numbers are not controlled. As hunter numbers continue to rise, the challenge to maintain the quality experience that Iowa's turkey enthusiasts are accustomed to becomes increasingly difficult. Nevertheless, maintaining that quality experience remains the DNR's primary goal. After all, its the *quality* of the cure that separates us from the rest of the "turkey fever-embraced" nation!

Dale L. Garner is a forest wildlife research biologist for the department in Chariton.

Terry W. Little is the wildlife research supervisor for the department in Des Moines.

Thoughts from a Turkey Hunter

I *love* turkey hunting . . . not just killing a wild turkey, although getting your bird is a part of the hunt. What I love is the hunting, the anticipation, the preparation and the process. The fact is, most city dwellers, like myself, just do not take the time to spend real quiet time in the woods. A turkey hunting license dictates which days we will be in the woods. It is then that we get out in the big timber and just sit, watch and listen.

Some of my most memorable experiences in the outdoors have occurred while quietly sitting in the predawn cold, waiting for nature to wake up. My senses are never more keen then when I am straining to hear that first early gobble from a treed bird, or to hear the wing beats as it flaps down to the ground. My eyes water as I scan the woods to see any sign of movement.

This past turkey season, the first movement I saw was a female woodduck flying from tree to tree searching for the perfect cavity to lay her precious cargo of eggs. Shortly after her departure, the robins began singing their early morning song. Within minutes, I could see movement all over the woods. From my vantage point, on the edge of a small clearing, I could see five fox squirrels busily feeding and doing what squirrels do. One watched me for some time, no doubt wondering what that camouflaged lump was on the floor of the woods. He must have decided that I was no threat to him because he eventually came down and scratched for acorns within ten feet of me. When something scared him, I looked up the ridge and saw a large dark figure moving slowly but steadily my way. I could tell that it was a turkey, a big turkey. I raised my shotgun into position and waited. The bird walked to within 15 yards of me and stopped. At that range I could see it was a jake. It's glossy black feathers, reddish head and the telltale small beard indicated this was a legal bird to shoot. I watched him over the top of my gun barrel debating whether I should take this young bird or wait for an old gobbler.

My thoughts were interrupted by a puff of wind in by face and the sudden appearance in my line of sight. A small ruby-crowned kinglet had landed on my gun barrel not ten inches from my face. After a few moments, it flitted off, apparently never knowing that what it had been sitting on was not a branch. Within seconds, a gobbler gobbled directly up the ravine from where I sat. I took this as an omen, telling me not to shoot this young bird. I held my position and watched the jake slowly walk off, never knowing how close he came to being Sunday dinner.

I relaxed my tense posture a little and waited for the gobbler to appear. He never did. After 20 minutes, I settled back down to my vigil. When the sun started to warm the ground I notice movement in the leaves. On closer inspection I would see ants, hundreds of ants . . . everywhere. My first thought was "Great! They are going to crawl into my clothes and bite me all over." Since I didn't want to move during this prime time for turkeys, I decided to just sit and keep my eyes on those little critters. The longer I watched, the more I realized this was not a randomly moving horde of ants. Each ant appeared to be on patrol, searching each grain of soil and every particle of leaf for food. The search pattern was perfect, and each ant went about its business without interruption. I thought, "How orderly nature is when you take the time to look closely."

My concentration was interrupted by the crass squawks of two great blue herons as they flew up the river. I always thought they sounded more like what prehistoric pterodactyls must have sounded than birds.

After about four hours in the same spot, I decided to move to a sunny ridge where I had previously seen turkeys feeding in mid-day. I made myself a nest in the top of a fallen oak tree and began my wait. The occasional sound from my box call brought no response from turkeys in the area. After two hours without seeing a bird, the lack of sleep started to settle in and my mind began to drift. I looked at the huge red oak tree lying before me. It is hard to explain, but a definite feeling of sadness swept over me. I thought how this magnificent tree must have stood here in the woods, a part of this community for more than a hundred years, but now it was dead. It undoubtedly served as a home for many birds and squirrels over the years. I am sure it also did its part to propagate its own species through the production of acorns. I wondered if any human eyes ever looked on this particular tree and appreciated its beauty and value. The more I thought the more I realized it didn't matter if some human did or did not appreciate the value. It was still a valuable part of the natural system. Even in death it was providing food and shelter for thousands of organisms. It would soon be returning to the soil to give life to new generations of plants and animals. I was no longer sad, but appreciated how perfect natural systems are. Why hadn't I thought about this before? Maybe I just never took the time.

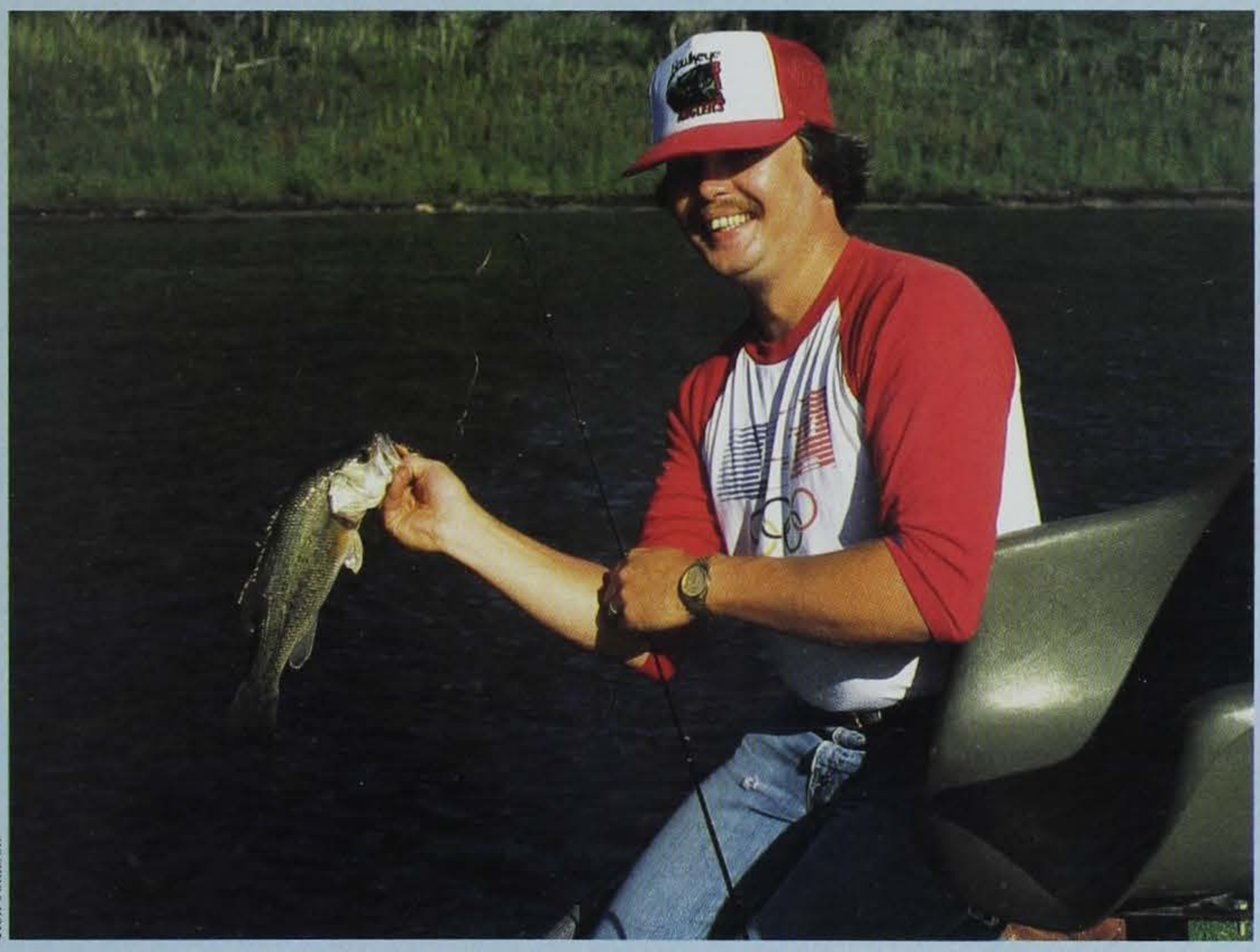
I didn't get my turkey that day but i did the next. Looking back on my hunt, I realized it's not the final moments of the hunt I will remember most. It's the quiet moments I spent close to nature that remain in my memory.

Hunting is what brought me into the woods, but it is nature that keeps me going back. When is the last time you spent a 14-hour day just sitting in a natural area observing life around you? It is not something many of us do often, but we should. The peace and appreciation for nature you feel are something you will never forget.

by Jim Zohrer

BASS HARVEST REGULATIONS

Understanding the Rules



Ron Johnson

Fishing isn't what it used to be. When this lake was new I used to catch a lot more bass, and big ones, too. It started declining when all those out-of-towners started showing up. We have regulations to help fishing, why aren't they working?

We've all heard them. They are "phrases of frustration" and most of us have said them at some point in our fishing "careers." Sometimes problems actually exist, sometimes they are mostly perceptions -- anglers may selectively remember an extremely good year of fishing. The important thing to remember is while regulations are sometimes the key to quality fishing, one regulation doesn't fit all situations. Each lake is different and therefore each fish population is different. Here, we will talk about largemouth bass, but the message can be important for a number of species. Lake quality and size can have a lot to do with the size, number and relative health of each fish population. It's important to remember, though, regulations aren't baseball caps. One size rarely fits all, nor should it. Certain species, such as largemouth bass, are easily exploitable and must be regulated in most public systems. This is especially important because they are top-level predators, and have a tremendous amount of influence on the quality of other fish species, especially in small lakes of 100 acres or less.

by Mark Flammang

Fishery managers use harvest regulations to perform a number of tasks. One of the biggest reasons behind a length limit is to preserve fishing quality. When we talk about quality we are referring to the size and numbers of the fish caught. This is especially important if you are trying to protect predator populations. Predators are the fish that keep the system "in balance." Because predators feed on a portion of fish like bluegill, crappie or yellow perch, remaining panfish can grow to a desirable size. Without enough predators of the proper size, a lake becomes "unbalanced." Fisheries biologists have to match the proper regulation with the proper fish population characteristics. One important

note -- fishery managers use regulations when we need to. It's pointless to slap on a regulation when there is no reason to believe it will provide the expected outcome. For example, a 10-inch minimum length limit on bluegills would be a ridiculous regulation because bluegills rarely reach 10 inches and the harvest of this important panfish would be unduly limited. The idea of plopping a special regulation on a lake because "it sure wouldn't do any harm" probably isn't a very effective method of managing fisheries. What fishery biologists are actually shooting for is to match the proper regulation to each lake, to get the most bass of the largest sizes or highest quality possible.

Types of Regulations

Bag Limits

One type of regulation is the bag limit, sometimes called a creel limit. Currently anglers can legally harvest three black bass (largemouth, smallmouth and spotted) in one day. The possession limit is six. The assumption that this type of regulation is actually protecting the fishery is probably a false one. Many fishery biologists have found bag limits without some other harvest restriction, such as length limit, are rarely effective. This can be true for a number of species, not just bass. The regulation just has to be too restrictive to be of any practical use. For instance, for a creel limit to be effective, it would probably have to be lowered to one fish or less a day -- maybe one fish every two or three days. "Fish hogs," or people that harvest a tremendous number of fish, usually aren't the problem in freshwater systems. Problems begin to arise when you have many anglers harvesting one or two fish. What actually results is the fishery is "nickeled and dimed to death" and harvest under these situations can often be excessive. This can be especially true for easily exploitable fish such as largemouth bass.

Minimum Length Limits

A more effective method of managing harvest is through length limit regulations. We have several types in Iowa. Most public lakes have a 15-inch minimum length limit. In other words, fish less than 15 inches must be released. A public lake with no specific length limit signs posted and no specific mention of alternate regulations in the *Iowa Fishing Regulations* booklet is subject to a 15-inch minimum length limit for largemouth bass. Some lakes have high minimum length limits on largemouth bass such as the 18-inch minimums at Little Wall Lake in Hamilton County or the 22-inch minimum at Green Valley in Union County (see your *1997 Iowa Fishing Regulations* for other high minimum length regulations).

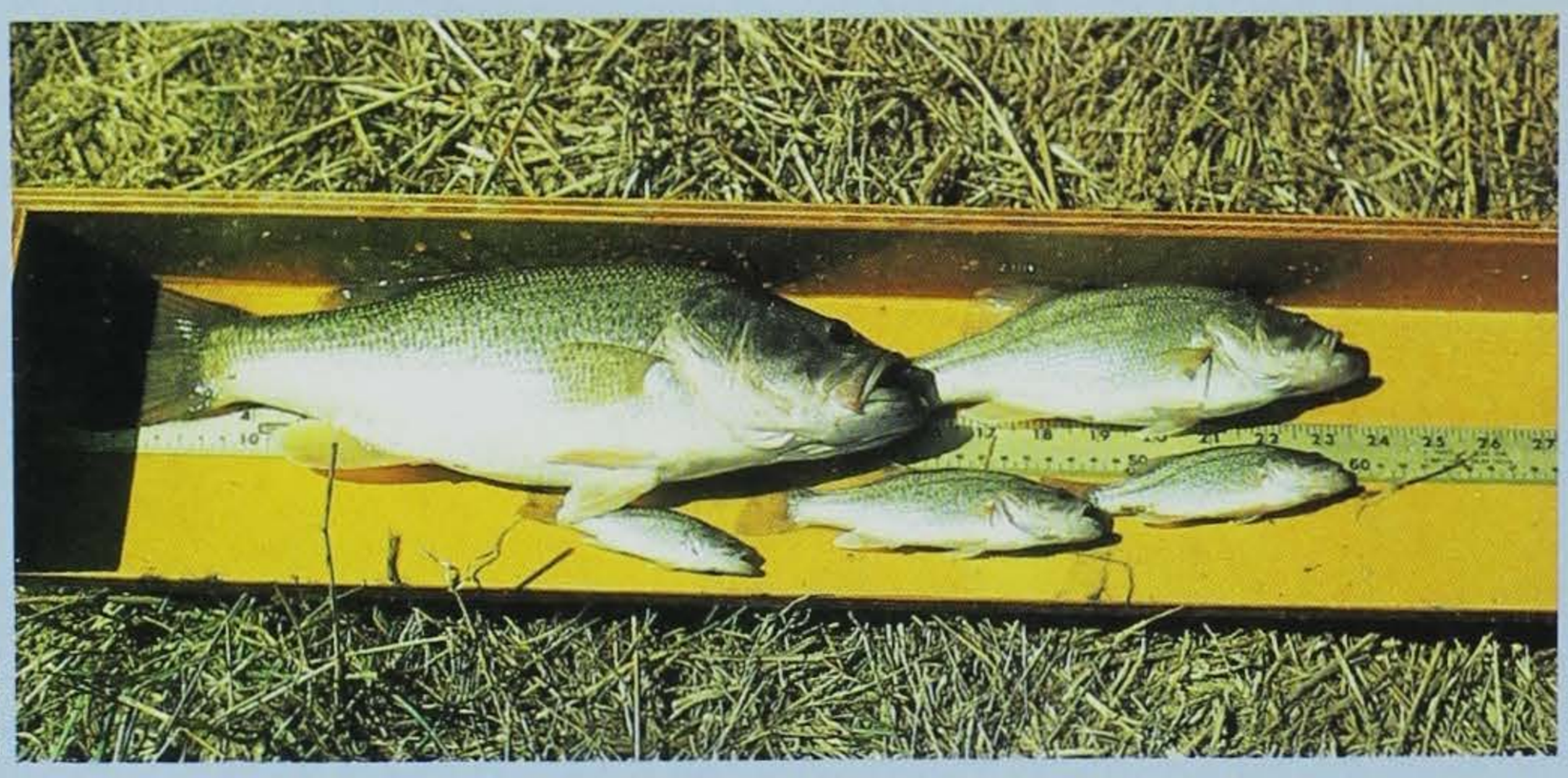
Slot Length Limits

Another type of regulation is a slot limit. This type of regulation protects fish of a specific length range. Hawthorn Lake in Mahaska County has a 12- to 16-inch protected slot which means any fish of that size must be immediately released. If you desire, you can keep a few fish below or above this limit.

Catch-and-Release Regulations

One final type of regulation is in experimental stages here in Iowa. Lake Wapello in Davis County is subject to a "no-kill" or "catch-and-release regulation" in which *any* largemouth bass caught must be returned to the water immediately. The goal of this regulation is to provide a reasonable chance of catching a "trophy" fish, in addition to increasing catch rates of other quality-sized bass.

Sounds like a lot of possibilities but each regulation is attached to largemouth bass populations with specific population trends. The fishery biologists know how to match bass density, biomass (weight of fish in a water body), and the rate at which these fish grow, to finally decide on a proper length limit. Two of these main points, density and biomass, are affected by a process called recruitment. Recruitment is simply the number of fish that survive from spawn to adulthood. Lakes that have large year-classes produced year after year are said to have "high" recruitment. An example is Hawthorn Lake in Mahaska County (Figure 1). The length fre-



Don Kline

■ Recruitment is the number of fish that survive from spawn to adulthood. Above is an excellent example of a bass population with consistent or "high" recruitment.

DNR

■ **Anglers sometimes recall "the good old days" but it's easy to see why good old days don't always last without proper regulation.**

■ **The goal behind high minimum length limits or catch-and-release regulations is to not only provide the possibility of catching a lunker like this but to also increase the total number of quality-sized bass caught.**

quency graph shows that Hawthorn Lake has many fish that are between four and five inches. We also see a consistent decline in numbers from that point but note that there really are no gaps in this graph. The reduction in number is simply due to natural mortality of older fish. Some lakes don't produce large year-classes every year. These lakes may produce strong year-classes every second or third year. An example of this type of population is the bass population at Lower Centerville Reservoir (Figure 2). Note we collected no fish between eight and 13 inches during a recent survey. Another gap exists between 17 and 21 inches. These two gaps tell us we are probably missing at least two year-classes. This hardly means that fishing is poor. To the contrary, angling for 13- to 16-inch fish is quite excellent. The difference in recruitment doesn't mean that these are poorer quality lakes in terms of fishing quality. In fact, the contrary can often be true. What it does mean, though, is that a different type of regulation is called for.

DNR

How To Match the Right Regulation to Each Lake

Why are each of the limits we discussed in place? Look at them in order. The statewide regulation of 15 inches is well suited for most water bodies. Let's consider the Centerville Reservoir example again. We know this lake has low recruitment -- largemouth bass don't always produce year-classes every year in this lake. By protecting the fish produced, we allow plenty of catch-and-release fishing while the fish are growing to more quality sizes. The same fish can be captured multiple times, preserving fishing quality. In certain instances, a minimum length limit may work exactly as expected up to the point the fish reach 15 inches. At that length, the fish can be legally harvested and few fish may exist in excess of the length limit. This situation currently exists at Indian Lake in Van Buren County (Figure 3). As you can see, our survey showed fish often survive to 15 inches but are quickly removed after that. We have seen this same trend for a number of consecutive years. When a year-class moves beyond the 15-inch length limit it is quickly harvested. This kind of relationship usually occurs in water bodies with higher-than-average angling pressure. In this instance, it may be possible and even desirable to increase the minimum length limit to improve quality. However, there are trade-offs for this change. When a length limit is increased, there is usually no increase in the weight of fish harvested, even though the fish you *are*

harvesting are larger than before. Natural death near the legal size reduces the total weight of harvestable fish. It's just not realistic to set a limit to increase the harvest of fish. High limits are justified for *catch-and-release* fishing of larger individuals, those that wouldn't exist at lower limits, such as the case of Indian Lake. Several Iowa water bodies currently have high minimum length limits of 18 inches or greater, in an attempt to provide improved angling.

Lake Wapello in Davis County has a no-kill or catch-and-release regulation. This type of regulation is really just an extension of the high minimum length limits, except extremely large individuals would theoretically be protected in hopes of developing a trophy fishery. This particular regulation was only implemented in 1993 following a complete renovation of the lake. We will be evaluating this regulation at Lake Wapello for a number of years to come.

If a water body has moderate to high recruitment and is protected by a 15-inch minimum length limit, a different result occurs in terms of fishing quality. By protecting fish less than 15 inches in water bodies where strong annual year-classes are produced, you find you are often left with bass populations dominated by tremendous numbers of "stockpiled" bass -- high-density, slow-growing fish, which can be considerably shorter than the length limit. All these predator mouths compete for food. They feed heavily on small panfish such as bluegill, crappie and yellow perch. This predation in turn reduces the panfish density. This leaves more food for the remaining panfish which grow faster and often provided outstanding panfish angling. This type of relationship generally holds up in small lakes. In larger systems, greater than 100 acres, however, the relationship is not so simple due to other influences.

The final type of regulation we use in Iowa is the protected-slot limit. Minimum-size limits in moderate to high recruitment lakes will yield high-density slow-growing largemouth bass populations. This is great if you desire a high-quality panfish population, but what if you desire bass quality, or it is a larger lake and the relationship between high bass density yielding large panfish quality doesn't hold up? The answer to this situation can be the protected slot. Under this regulation, anglers are allowed to remove small bass, less than 12 inches and larger individuals, 16 inches or longer. This harvest of subslot fish can reduce density and competition. Fewer fish means more food to go around, faster growth and larger fish to be caught. It's important to note that this regulation will not work in lakes with high fishing pressure, for instance in urban areas.

So you see, setting bass regulations isn't something fishery biologists take lightly. A great deal of data must be gathered, analyzed and discussed before any regulation change is ever made. The process can be long and tedious, but we wouldn't have it any other way. The whole process leads to the correct decision -- correct for the lake, the fish and most importantly, the Iowa angler.

Mark Flammang is a fisheries biologist for the department at Rathbun Fish Hatchery.

Figure 1. Length distribution of largemouth bass from Hawthorn Lake.

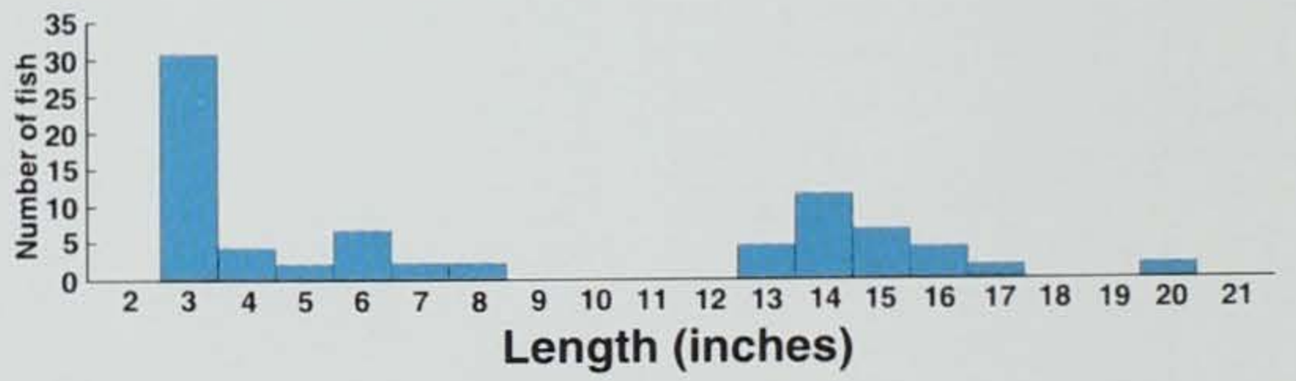


Figure 2. Length distribution of largemouth bass from Lower Centerville Reservoir.

Figure 3. Length distribution of largemouth bass from Indian Lake. (Note most fish above the length limit are probably harvested.)

Don Kline

■ **Creel clerks gather valuable fishery information but also serve as added protection against illegal harvest.**

Following the Rules

One problem that arises when setting any sort of length limit is the regulation isn't always followed. Most anglers are law-abiding and many who illegally harvest fish do it inadvertently. However, ignorance of the regulations has never been an excuse. Even small levels of illegal harvest are enough to adversely affect the potential benefits of length limits. For instance, a recent study in Michigan found that if between two and 22 of every 100 anglers harvested illegal-size largemouth bass it was enough to adversely impact the population. The reason for the range is differences in lakes and largemouth populations, but the bottom line is illegal harvest can have a devastating impact on bass quality. This is especially significant when you consider Missouri studies several years ago showed between 40 and 69 percent of all bass in a lake could be harvested at moderately high levels of pressure and that was in only four days of fishing! It takes very little effort to hurt bass populations.

Obviously the DNR has a big role to play in stopping illegal harvest. The first line of defense is the presence of the local conservation officer. The fear of fines from a DNR official helps deter would-be violators and is an excellent way to protect fish. Creel clerks, who gather important information used by managers to evaluate the fisheries, provide an added presence and increase the chances illegal harvest will be detected. In addition, the creel clerks have the authority to obtain any required information for issuing citations and fines. However, one very important method of ensuring regulation compliance lies in the public's hands. Often other anglers, campers or hikers are witness to illegal harvest of fish. You have an opportunity to help natural resources personnel and protect your resources through the use of the toll-free Turn In Poachers (TIP) hotline at 1-800-532-2020. Record important information such as the license plate number and the time and location of the violation. The highest percentage of successful cases are made as the violation is in progress. The TIP hotline is provided to help stop poachers, but it doesn't work without public support.

The most important thing to keep in mind is the resource is there to be enjoyed. The way to protect and improve the quality of Iowa largemouth bass angling is through implementing and abiding by a set of regulations that address the innate differences among lakes. Each of us has a responsibility to abide by these regulations. In this way we may all find that "good old days" actually aren't all that far off.

-- *MF*

Iowa DNR State Forest Nursery

1997 Seedling Order Form

To order by **phone** call **1-800-865-2477** or **515-233-1161**
To **FAX** your order call **515-233-1131**
Visit Our Homepage At
http://www.state.ia.us/government/dnr/organiza/forest/forest.html

MasterCard and Visa Accepted

Restrictions Plants must be ordered in units of 100 and the total order must be a minimum of 500 plants. (Wildlife and songbird packets may be ordered separately and may be added to in units of 100.) The nursery stock must be planted and used for establishing or improving existing forest, erosion control, wildlife or water conservation. Nursery stock cannot be resold or given away with roots attached, to any person, firm, corporation or agency, or planted for new windbreak, shade or ornamental purposes. All plantings must be protected from fire and domestic livestock grazing. All trees planted or used in violation of the above restrictions are subject to forfeit for destruction.

Payment DO NOT SEND MONEY with your order. A bill will be sent. For orders more than $100, the nursery will bill you for 20 percent of the cost with the remainder to be paid by March 1, 1997.

Spring Delivery Orders are shipped via a state refrigerated truck to a drop-off point in each county in April.

Claims Claims for any cause must be made within 10 days after receipt of plants. We give no warranty, expressed or implied, as to the productiveness or life of the material, and we will not be in any way responsible for results or economic losses incurred or claimed by the consumer.

MAIL ORDER FORMS TO:

Iowa Department of Natural Resources • State Forest Nursery • 2404 South Duff • Ames • Iowa • 50010

Detach and mail to address above.

Iowa DNR Seedling Order Form

(Please Print)

_____
(Landowner Name)

_____
(Mailing Address)

_____
(City) (State) (Zip)

_____
(Area Code) (Phone Number)

☐ I will pick up my order at the Nursery when notified.

☐ Delivery to a drop-off point by refrigerated state truck. List county where seedlings are to be delivered.
County: _____

1. These trees are to be planted in _____ County.

2. Did you purchase plants from the Nursery last year?

☐ Yes ☐ No

General Seedling Information

Plants must be ordered in units of 100 and the total order must be a minimum of 500 plants.
Wildlife and songbird packets may be ordered separately.

Code #	Species	Mature Size Range	Seedling Age (Years)	Seedling Height Range	Moisture			Light		Remarks	$$ /100
					Dry	Well-Drained	Moist	Full Sun	Some Shade		
16.0	E. Red Cedar	40-50'	2	6-16"	x	x	x	x	x	Tolerates poor, gravely sites. Prefers airy site. Very drought resistant. Good wildlife food and cover. Native.	$15
30.0	White Pine	50-60'	3	6-16"		x	x	x	x	Intolerant of air pollutants. Good timber tree. Adaptable to most sites. Native to NE Iowa.	$15
30.1			3	17-24"							
20.0	Scotch Pine	30-60'	2	12-17"	x	x		x		Hardy. Adaptable.	$15
17.0	Red Pine	50-80'	2	8-18"		x		x		Requires cool sites. Good timber tree.	$15
15.0	Ponderosa Pine	60-100'	2	8-12"	x	x		x		Recommended for western Iowa only.	$15
10.0	Jack Pine	35-50'	2rp	10-18"	x	x		x		Hardy and adaptable. Good cover for coal spoil banks.	$15
43.0	White Spruce	40-60'	3	8-16"	x	x	x	x		Good wildlife habitat. Medium growth rate.	$15
13.0	Norway Spruce	40-60'	3	10-18"		x		x	x	Good wildlife habitat. Medium to fast growth.	$15
24.0	Black Walnut	50-70'	1	10-16"		x		x		Valuable wood products tree. Requires deep, rich, well-drained soil. Native.	$24
24.1	**SOLD OUT**		1rp	17-24"							$26
08.0	Green Ash	50-60'	1	8-16"		x	x	x		Valuable wood products tree. Very good firewood. Native.	$23
08.1			2rp	17-28"							$25
28.0	White Ash	50-80'	2	8-16"		x		x		Valuable wood products tree. Very good firewood. Native to all but NW Iowa.	$23
21.1	Silver Maple **SOLD OUT**	60-80'	2rp	18"tp		x	x	x	x	Bottomland sites. Valuable wood products tree. Native.	$25
83.0	Cottonwood	75-100'	1	8" Rooted Cutting	x	x	x	x		Good for fuelwood plantation. Very adaptable.	$23
53.0	Poplar, Hybrid	40-60'	1	8" Rooted Cutting	x	x	x	x		Good for fuelwood plantation. Very adaptable.	$23
86.0	Black Willow	40-60'	1	8" Rooted Cutting						Good for streambank protection and filtration.	$23
37.0	Bigtooth Aspen **SOLD OUT**	60-75'	1	8" Rooted Cutting			x	x		Very hardy, rapid growing. Valuable for fuelwood plantations.	$23
41.0	Northern Red Oak **SOLD OUT**	60-80'	2rp	10-16"			x	x	x	Valuable wood products tree. Excellent firewood. Native to all but NW corner of state.	$24
41.1			2rp	17-24"							$26
41.2	**SOLD OUT**		3rp	18"tp							$26
04.0	Bur Oak	70-80'	2rp	10-16"	x	x	x	x		Adaptable to various soils. Excellent firewood. Native.	$23
04.1	**SOLD OUT**		2rp	17-24"							$25
29.0	White Oak	50-80'	2rp	10-16"		x	x	x		Valuable wood products tree. Excellent firewood. Native to all but NW corner of state.	$24
29.1			2rp	17-24"							$26
33.0	Swamp White Oak	50-60'	2rp	10-16"	x	x	x	x		Good wildlife food. Native. Grows well on wet sites, as well as dry.	$23
33.1	**SOLD OUT**		2rp	7-24"							$25
54.0	Pin Oak	60-90'	1	6-16"	x	x	x	x		Good wildlife food. Native, Brilliant red fall color.	$23
54.1	**SOLD OUT**		2rp	17-24"							$25
51.1	Mixed Oak	50-80'	2rp	10-16"						May contain red oak, white oak, bur oak and black oak in varying proportions.	$23
79.0	Nanking Cherry	6-10'	2	17-24"	x	x	x	x		Hardy dense shrub. Good for wildlife food and cover. Flowers early, pink to white. Fruits are edible.	$25
39.0	Common Chokecherry **SOLD OUT**	20-30'	1	6-12"	x	x	x	x	x	Hardy. Good food for wildlife. Native.	$23
55.0	Crab, Siberian **SOLD OUT**	15-25'	1	6-12"		x		x	x	Good wildlife food and cover.	$23
18.0	Dogwood,Redosier	10-15'	1	10-16"						Hardy. Red twigs. Forms large colony of plants from original.	$23
18.1			2	17-24"		x	x	x	x	Good cover. Native.	$25
80.0	Highbush Cranberry **SOLD OUT**	8-12'	2	17-24"		x	x	x	x	Good wildlife food and cover.	$25
01.1	Honeysuckle, Amur	12-15'	2	13-18"	x	x		x	x	Occasional winter killing of branches in northern Iowa. Good wildlife habitat and food for birds.	$23
47.0	Lilac, Common	8-15'	2	6-12"		x		x		Hardy. Shrub border or in groupings. Good wildlife habitat.	$23
12.0	Ninebark	5-9'	1	8-16"						Very hardy. Good wildlife habitat. Native to most of state.	$23
12.1			2	17-24"		x	x	x	x		$25
03.0	Olive, Autumn	6-8'	2	10-14"		x		x	x	Good wildlife food and cover. Plant on protected sites. Not recommended for northern Iowa.	$23
78.0	Serviceberry	15-20'	2	6-12"	x	x	x	x	x	Large shrub or small tree. Excellent wildlife food. White flowers in early spring.	$23
31.0	American Plum **SOLD OUT**	10-15'	2	17-24"	x	x	x	x		Good wildlife food and cover. Forms large colony of plants from original. Native.	$25
96.0	Wildlife Packet									200 plants valuable to wildlife. 50 conifers, 50 hardwoods, 100 shrubs.	$45
95.0	Songbird Packet									Mixed variety of 20 plants beneficial to songbirds.	$20

tp = top pruned rp = root pruned

Easy To Get To, Walnut Woods Offers Enjoyment For All

By the River's Edge

by Terry Manning

Ken Formanek

Walnut Woods State Park cradles the Raccoon River just across from West Des Moines. The first European settlers must have been impressed with the large number of walnut trees on the tract. A former head forester once told me the black walnut trees at the park had been grafted for many years because of their strong disease resistance. This virtue has made this one of the largest native black walnut stands in North America. Consequently, the public is not allowed to collect black walnuts in the park. They are collected for the state nursery to produce seedlings to be planted around the state.

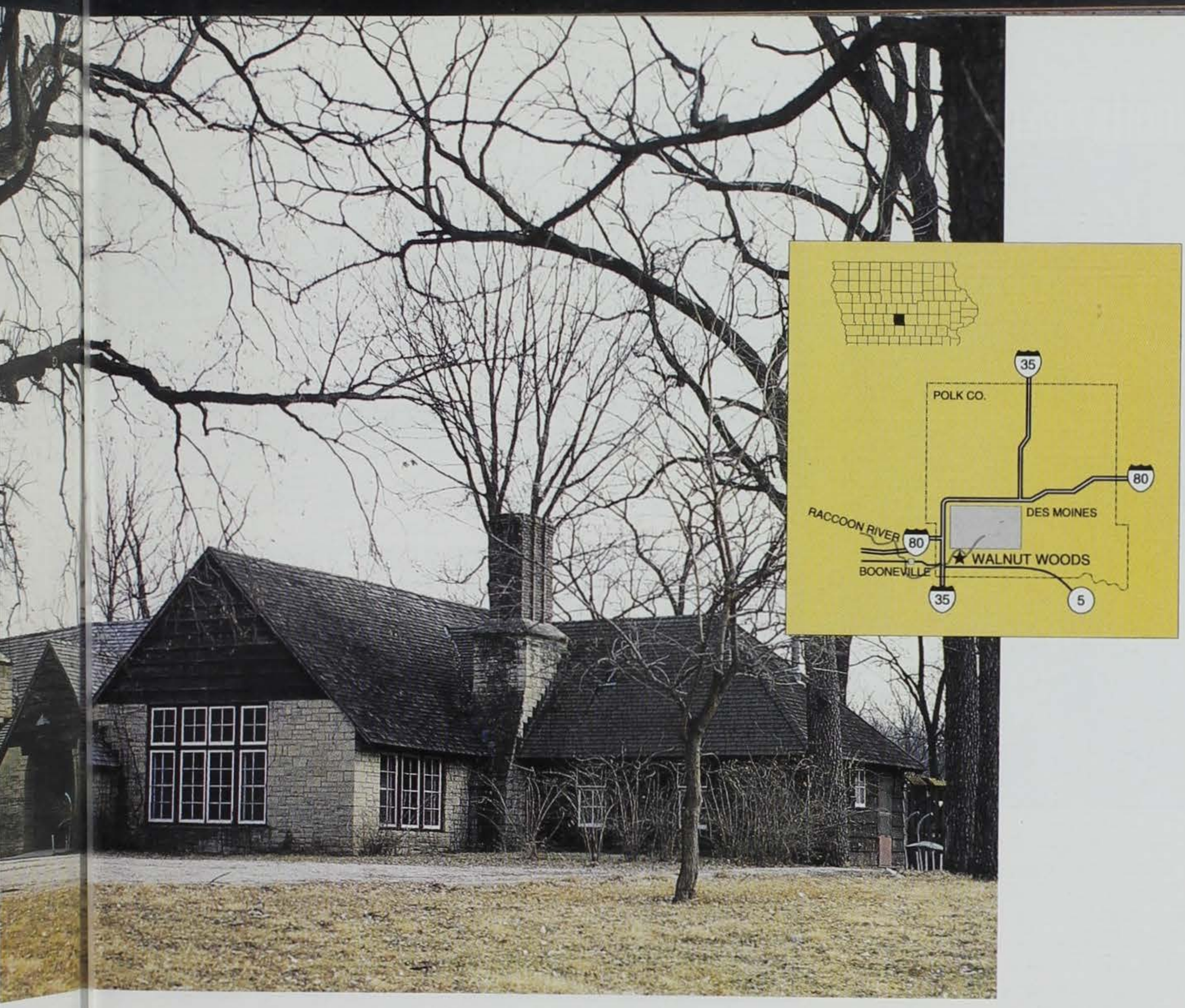
Walnut Woods is the closest state park to both continental interstate highways -- 35 and 80. And, if you are familiar with other Des Moines points-of-interest, it is 10 minutes from Living History Farms, 15 minutes from the state Capitol and State Historical buildings, and about 20 minutes from the Iowa State Fairgrounds. When you consider all this, while roaming the 275 acres of woods, the park seems out of place so near the most populous metropolitan area in the state.

One of the most popular features of the park is its lodge. It has been a center of enjoyment for visitors since 1937, when it was built by the Work Progress Administration. It was recently renovated, to repair damage done by the flood of '93. It supports a large meeting room, small kitchen, handicapped-accessible lavatories, a patio and two large fireplaces built from eastern Iowa limestone.

Camping at Walnut Woods is non-modern and no reservations are taken. Be reminded that although there are eight sites with electricity, there are no showers or modern toilet facilities.

The river runs only about 100 yards from the camping area if you are of a mind to fish. Fishing on the Raccoon River is as good as it gets for those interested in flathead and channel catfish. Many other species of fish are also taken from the river. It is not unusual to see a 15- to 20-pound catfish brought out by those stout of heart. You may want to stop by the park office and see some of the big ones caught on film. I can also tell you a few fish stories of my own.

For fishing trips or leisurely days on the water, canoers and boaters will find the park's boat ramp a good place to launch. Many canoers float from Walnut Woods to the Des Moines Waterworks Park for a two- or three-hour trip. People may also put in near Booneville, by the bridge, and take a four- to six-hour trip depending on the water levels. Make sure those boat registrations are up to date and you have the proper PFDs (personal flotation devices) for your trip.



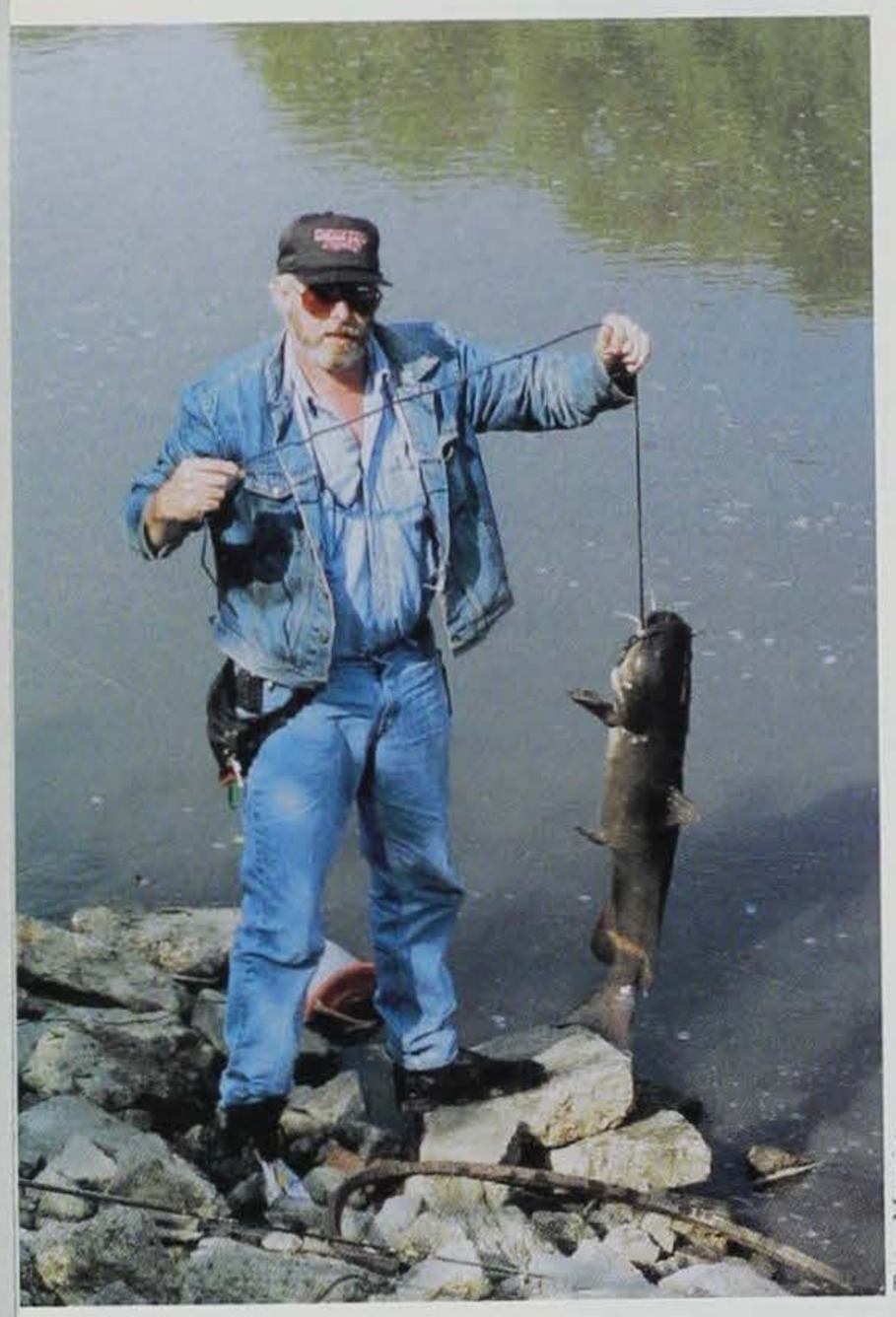
Picnickers will find tables and grills along and near the river, and there are about three miles of hiking trails. The terrain is very flat since this is a river bottom area and the elevation varies no more than 14 feet in the whole area.

Bridle trails have been included in the park since 1939 and people often bring their own horses in for a day of riding. Walnut Woods has no overnight horse campground facilities.

One of the most popular events each October at Walnut Woods is the haunted forest put on by the West and South Des Moines Jaycees. For more information on the event, call the Jaycees in the fall.

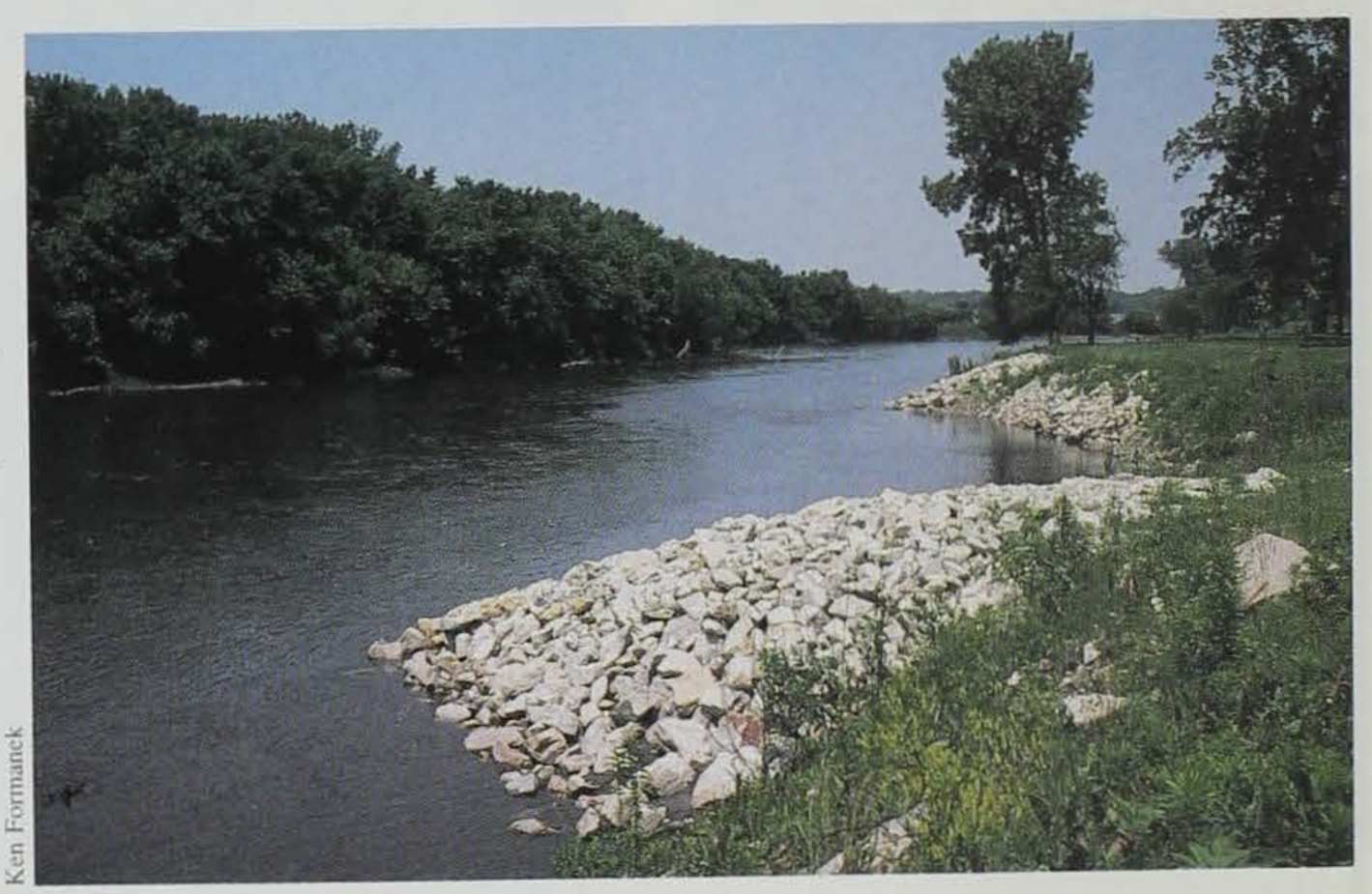
During the 1993 flood, not one square acre of the park was above

Ken Formanek



Terry Manning

Terry Manning



Ken Formanek

water, but today visitors will see little evidence of the damage done. In fact, the park has probably flooded hundreds of times during the thousands of years it took to carve out the river valley. Nature has a way of repairing its damage and those of us who are familiar with the area are grateful for that. This is perhaps a reminder once again that we must allow the land to recover in its own way, on its own terms.

Walnut Woods has been a state park since 1925 and during that time several generations and thousands of people have been able to enjoy its beauty. We hope you to will come and see what is one of the most accessible parks in Iowa.

You may call the park ranger for more information at 515/281-4502, or write to: Walnut Woods State Park, 8951 SW 52nd Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50265. We would like to hear from you.

Terry Manning is the park ranger at Walnut Woods.

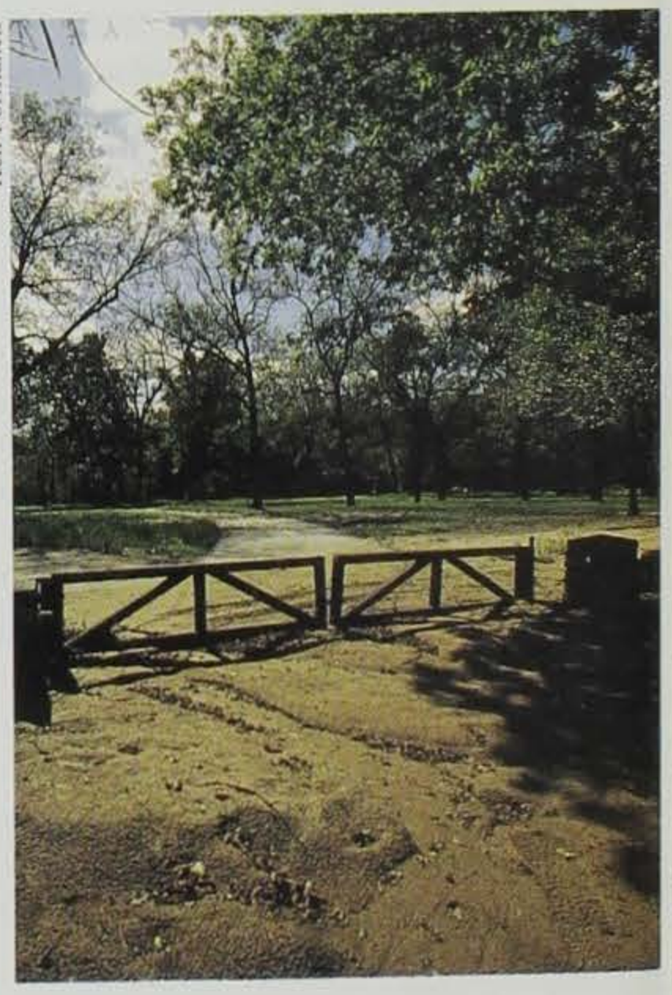
■ (previous page) Walnut Woods is famous for its walnut trees and lodge.

■ (above left) Flathead fishing at Walnut Woods is as good as it gets.

■ (above) Many canoers float the Raccoon River from Walnut Woods to the Des Moines Waterworks Park or from Booneville to Walnut Woods.

For fishing trips or leisurely days on the water, canoers and boaters will find the park's boat ramp a good place to launch.

■ (right) The Flood of '93 wreaked havoc on Walnut Woods. Today, however, visitors will see little evidence of the damage.



Ken Formanek

Stop the Spread of Eurasian Watermilfoil

Eurasian watermilfoil was first discovered in Iowa in 1993 in Crystal Lake in Hancock County. It has since been reported in St. Benedict Pond in Kossuth County, Walnut Creek Marsh in Ringgold County, Kounty Pond in Buchanan County, Wilson Grove Pond in Bremer County and Snyder Bend Lake in Woodbury County (see map below). To date, all infestations in interior waterbodies have been successfully eradicated with the exception of Wilson Grove Pond and Snyder Bend. These locations are scheduled for eradication this spring.

Currently it is illegal in Iowa to 1) transport Eurasian watermilfoil on a public road, 2) place a trailer or launch a watercraft with Eurasian watermilfoil attached in public waters and 3) operate a watercraft in a marked Eurasian watermilfoil area. The penalty for violating this law is a $100 fine. The law requires the DNR to identify bodies of water with infestations and post signs alerting boaters. According to the law, the DNR may prohibit boating, fishing, swimming and trapping in infested bodies of water.

Eurasian water milfoil is a highly prolific perennial submergent aquatic plant spreading primarily through vegetative propagation. When the plant is broken into small pieces, these fragments can take root and grow a new plant. Fragmentation can occur as a result of boating activities or naturally through a process called autofragmentation which occurs at the end of the normal growing season. Once the plant has been fragmented, these pieces can be carried to new locations in a waterbody by wind or water currents. They may also be transported between bodies of water after they become attached to boats and/or trailers.

The plant is capable of growing under a wide range of environmental conditions and on a variety of bottom substrates. Although the plant typically grows in shallow water, under clear wa-

Lowell Washburn

■ **The DNR posts signs to warn Iowans of Eurasian watermilfoil infested lakes. It is illegal to operate watercraft in a marked Eurasian watermilfoil area.**

■ **The blue dots are areas where Eurasian watermilfoil was found and treated. The red dots are current infestations.**

1.Crystal Lake
2. St. Benedict Pond
3. Walnut Creek Marsh
4. Kounty Pond
5. Wilson Grove Pond
6. Snyder Bend
7. Mississippi River

DNR

Practical Conservationist

ter conditions it can exist in water up to 30 feet deep. The surface mat-forming growth and prolific nature of the plant also allows it to out-compete and replace native aquatic vegetation. For these reasons, Eurasian watermilfoil is extremely difficult to manage and control.

The results of boat access and aquatic vegetation monitoring during last year's boating season suggest Eurasian watermilfoil will continue to be a problem in Iowa. *How* big a problem will depend on the cooperation of citizens like yourselves.

You can help effectively manage and control the spread of this aquatic invader by:

- Cleaning all aquatic vegetation from your boat and trailer before leaving any boat ramp.
- Removing all plants and other debris from boats, motors, trailers and other equipment before launching -- especially if you have been in an infested area.
- Disposing of any plant debris away from the lake.
- Reporting any aquatic vegetation you suspect is Eurasian watermilfoil to DNR fisheries personnel.
- Passing the word about Eurasian watermilfoil to your friends and neighbors.

DNR

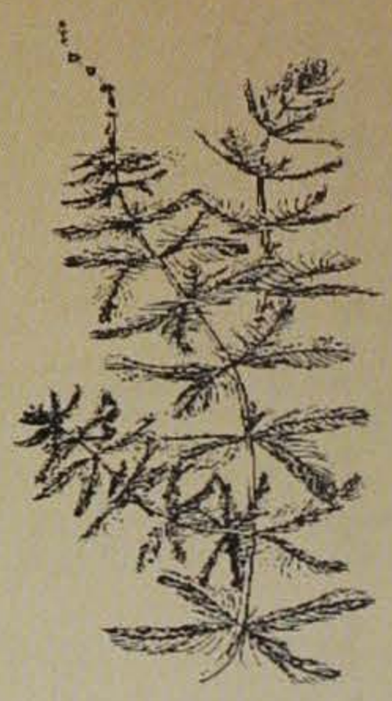
■ **Boating activity is the primary means of spreading Eurasian watermilfoil.**

A single fragment can establish the weed in a lake.

Remember boating activity is the primary means of spreading Eurasian watermilfoil from lake to lake.

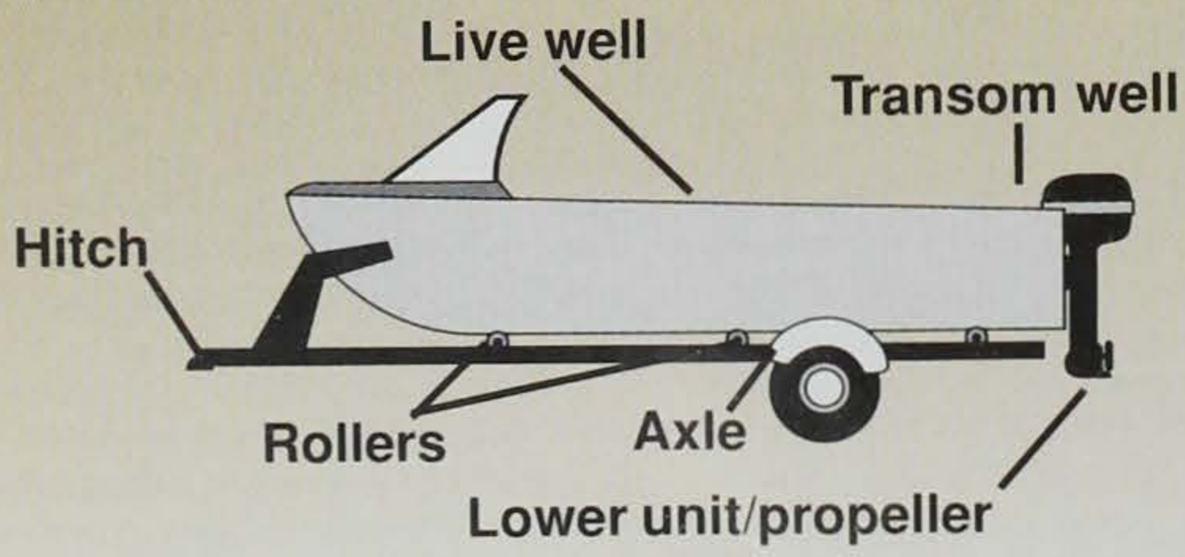
For more information contact Eurasian Watermilfoil Information, DNR, 122 252nd Ave., Spirit Lake, IA 52360, (712)336-1840. (Also, see *Classroom Corner* pages 55-56 and *Conservation Update* pages 60-61 in this issue.)

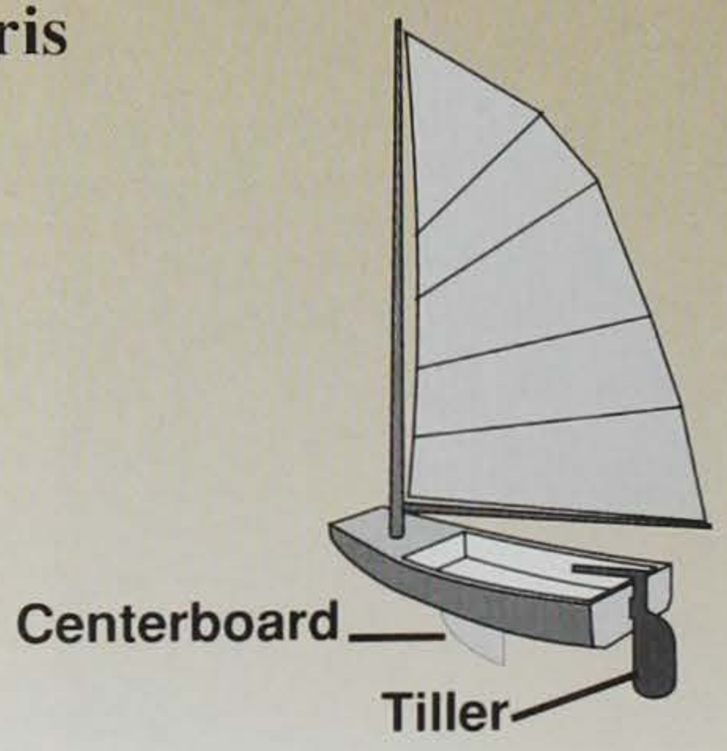
-- Gary Phillips, Iowa Lakes Community College



■ **Eurasian watermilfoil has long stems with feather-like leaves in whorls of four. The leaves have 9-21 leaflets.**

Areas to Check for Plants and Other Debris





Aquatic Roots by Barb Gigar

This activity is adapted from the *Project WILD Aquatic* manual, copyright 1992, Western Regional Environmental Education Council.

"Exotics" have gotten quite a bit of press during the past few years. These nonnative plants and animals can have profound impacts on native plants and animals, and their habitats. The purpose of this activity is to acquaint students with at least three aquatic exotics and their effects on plants, animals, recreation, etc.

Background:

An exotic plant or animal is one which did not naturally occur in that specific location. Over the years, people have introduced various plants and animals into the waters and lands of our continent. Some introductions have been intentional and some accidental. Effects from the introduction of exotic or nonnative species can range from detrimental to beneficial. Some introductions may have no noticeable effect. Many times humans have a limited understanding of the effects resulting from an introduction. Some introductions may have **both** positive and negative effects, depending on one's perspective.

For example, brown trout and common carp were intentionally introduced into American waters from Europe in the 1800s. Carp are bottom feeders. They tend to destroy the spawning sites as well as the nesting and feeding sites of other fish. Carp also damage the suitability of some vegetation for waterfowl. Brown trout have adapted well and do not produce extensive negative side effects for other fish. They also are valued by many people who fish.

Several other exotics have been introduced into Iowa waters in the more recent past, including zebra mussels, purple loosestrife and Eurasian watermilfoil. The accidental introduction of these exotic species has taken its toll in damages on habitat of native species. Biologists have attempted to minimize or control the damaging consequences resulting from exotics. These efforts are costly and often create problems of their own.

Eurasian watermilfoil was introduced to the United States in the early 1940s and is found in many Minnesota lakes in the Twin Cities area, but sightings in Iowa have been limited. This submersed aquatic plant forms thick mats that can choke-out native vegetation and interfere with recreation such as swimming, boating and fishing. It can be spread by a single fragment attached to a boat or trailer moving from an infested lake to another lake.

Purple loosestrife is a wetland plant from Europe and Asia that was introduced to the East Coast of North America in the 1800s. It was distributed as an ornamental plant for gardens and spreads quickly by seeds (one plant can produce two million seeds annually). New plants can also sprout from roots or broken stems. Purple loosestrife invades marshes, lake edges and backwaters, replacing cattails and other wetland plants. Research on the use of insect predators as a means of biological control has been done in Iowa. This exotic can be found in Mississippi backwaters and in marshes, ditches and other shallow-water areas in northern Iowa.

Zebra mussels are small clams (1/2 to 2 inches) which attach with small tufts of fiber to any solid substrate . They were introduced into the Great Lakes in 1985 via transoceanic ships. By 1996, nearly all river systems in the northeastern U.S. were infested as well as several inland lakes in Wisconsin and Michigan. Zebra mussels form clusters clogging intake pipes. They compete with native mussels for food and even form colonies on native mussel shells. They spread rapidly because, unlike native mussels which have young that must attach to a host fish species to mature, zebra

Age:

Grades 5-12

Subjects:

Science, Social Studies

Objectives:

Students will:

1. trace the origins of exotic aquatic animals and/or plants currently found in Iowa;
2. evaluate their impacts on local ecosystems; and
3. discuss ways to help reduce the spread of these exotics and/or minimize their impacts.

Materials:

world map; yarn; paper; reference materials, list of local exotic plants and animals (see "Background")

Vocabulary:

exotic, native, benefits, liabilities

Other Resources:

Following are resource materials available from the DNR:

Brochures: *A Field Guide to Aquatic Exotic Plants and Animals*; *You Can Help Stop the Spread of Eurasian Watermilfoil*, *You Can Help Stop the Spread of Zebra Mussels*

Video: *Aquatic Exotics* (Copies of this video have been provided to area education agency video libraries. Contact your AEA.)

Recent *Iowa Conservationist* Articles: *Aliens*, pp. 4-9, July/August 1995; *Practical Conservationist*, pp 53-54, *Conservation Update*, pp. 60-61, March/April 1997

Internet: Several home pages can be found on the Internet for Eurasian watermilfoil, purple loosestrife and zebra mussels.

General information about exotics is included in the DNR Fishieries Bureau home page (http://www.state.ia.us/fish).

Classroom Corner

Extensions:

1. Investigate and compare local, state and federal laws pertaining to introducing exotics into aquatic environments.

2. Investigate how humans have reintroduced some wildlife species into their original habitat where the species had previously become extinct. Have students distinguish differences and similarities between "re-introductions" and "exotics."

Evaluation:

1. Name three native aquatic plants and animals that exist in your area. Name three exotic aquatic plants and animals that exist in your area.

2. Give four reasons why an aquatic plant or animal might be introduced in an area. Are these reasons appropriate, in your judgment? Why or why not?

3. A local organization has proposed a new fish be introduced into Iowa's rivers or lakes. List at least five questions which should be answered about the fish before the proposal is approved or rejected.

■ **Zebra mussels**

Ken Formanek

Barb Gigar is the aquatic education coordinator located at the department's Springbrook Conservation Education Center at Guthrie Center.

mussel larvae are free-swimming and can attach to boats, barges, or any other surface. In Iowa zebra mussels are currently found in the Mississippi River.

Early in our country's history there were no laws regarding the introduction of new plant or animal species. Now, most states have laws regulating this activity to prevent "mistakes" similar to those made in the past before people knew what could happen.

There are always trade-offs involved with the accidental or intentional introduction of a species into an ecosystem. Sometimes the impacts are difficult to judge ahead of time. Laws are intended to force a careful review of benefits and liabilities before the intentional introduction of a new species is allowed. Introduction of a species judged or anticipated to have mostly detrimental impacts is usually not allowed.

The major purpose of this activity is to explore the role of introduced species in local ecosystems and to recognize the importance of regulating new introductions.

Procedure:

1. Briefly discuss the aquatic exotics included in the background information.

2. Help the students to establish clear working definitions of "native" and "exotic." A native species is one which naturally occurs in an area. Any plant or animal not naturally occurring in the ecosystems of the United States becomes an "exotic" once it is introduced.

3. Next, ask each student or small group of students to do library research about one particular species known to be introduced as an exotic to the area or state. (Species not discussed in the background information may be researched also.) Within the class, a variety of introduced aquatic species will be studied. Each student or group of students should prepare both oral and written reports. Have them gather information about the origins of the plant or animal and its impacts in the area. Ask them to decide whether the introduction seemed to create more benefits or liabilities for the ecosystem. They could create a two-column list of benefits and liabilities.

In addition to simply listing benefits and liabilities, they should assess the importance of each item in the columns. Benefits and liabilities -- positive and negative effects -- may not have equal value. Some introductions may seem to have both positive and negative effects. This will be reflected when the students list items under both the "benefits" and "liabilities" columns.

4. Ask each student or group of students to report to the class. Following the reports, encourage discussion and debate. Ask the students to identify and discuss potential trade-offs involved. Then, ask the students to evaluate the appropriateness of each of the introductions identifying and describing their criteria. They may also consider the potential introduction of a species common elsewhere but not yet in their area.

5. As a visual summary, have the students create a "network" of the exotics on a world map. Stretch a strand of yarn from their location to the origin of each organism. Place a tag on the yarn with the plant's or animal's name.

6. Preventing "accidental" introductions is important also. Develop a list of ways these introductions can occur and ways to help assure they don't happen. Discuss the importance of laws and regulations to prevent, control and/or allow introductions of species.

Conservation Update

Renew Boat Registrations

Iowa boat owners are reminded that this is the year to renew their boat registrations at their county recorder's office. Every registration certificate and number issued expires at midnight, April 30, in odd-numbered years.

With few exceptions, such as non-power, non-sail canoes or kayaks 13 feet or less in length and inflatable non-power, non-sail craft seven feet or less in length, all vessels operated on public waters must be registered.

Registrations fees vary, ranging from $5 to $28, depending upon the type and size of the vessel. A $1 writing fee per registration is charged in addition to the registration fee.

Boat owners with questions concerning specific regulations should contact their local conservation officer. For a copy of the *Iowa Boating Regulations* brochure, which includes a table of the various boat registration fees, write the Iowa DNR, Boating Regulations, Wallace State Office Bldg., 900 E. Grand, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034, (515) 281-5145.

Jerry D. Leonard

1997 Youth Hunter Education Challenge

This year's challenge is scheduled for June 6, 7 and 8 at the 4-H camp near Madrid. Teams compete in contests covering a wide spectrum of hunter education knowledge and skills. Entrants must be accompanied by a certified hunter education instructor.

Contact Sonny Satre, DNR safety coordinator, (515)281-8652 for more information or Merry Rankin, ISU, 124 Science II, Ames, IA, (515)294-7222

■ **Wildlife Forever executive director Douglas H. Grann presents Governor Branstad with a $5,000 challenge grant check. The funds will be used by the DNR to study urban white-tailed deer in the Des Moines area using radio telemetry equipment.**

DNR, ISU Share Award

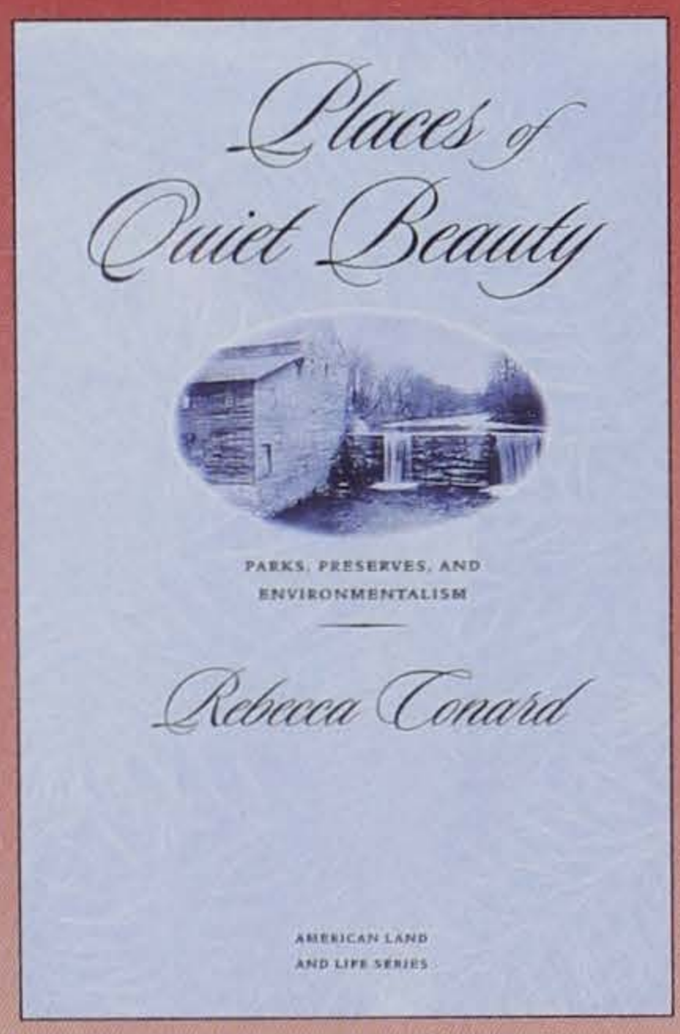
During the December meeting of the Natural Resources Commission, the DNR fisheries bureau and Iowa State University were presented with an award recognizing their research work with walleye production. The award was presented by Mike Gibson, president of the administration section of the American Fisheries Society.

"This was a multi-agency project to evaluate and develop techniques for raising walleye from hatching fry to larger fingerlings," Gibson said, while presenting the award. "It is refreshing to have such a project that works in such a cooperative spirit."

A major obstacle in hatching and raising walleye comes during the critical transition stage when the fry's air bladder inflates and the young begin to eat formulated feed. Results show that by using the techniques developed through this project, bladder inflation rates increased from an initial 15 percent to about 90 percent, and survival rates were raised significantly, from the initial 20 percent to approximately 64 percent. In addition, the fish also showed improved growth.

DNR research biologist Andy Moore and ISU's Dr. Bob Summerfelt were introduced as major participants in this very successful walleye research project.

Conservation Update



Ken Formanek

Places of Quiet Beauty: Parks, Preserves and Environmentalism

In 1992, I departed Des Moines by jet for a short vacation. From my carry-on I pulled the latest *Annals of Iowa* and began reading Dr. Rebecca Conard's article "Hot Kitchens in Places of Quiet Beauty." Through careful research and attention to detail, Conard told the story of the early days of Iowa's state parks and natural area conservation. Those days culminated in the 1918 purchase of Backbone State Park -- Iowa's first. The article described an early debate that circles over park advocates now and in the future. Should parks be areas of refuge for plants and animals, or should they serve as places of recreation and renewal for humans?

Places of Quiet Beauty: Parks, Preserves and Environmentalism, (University of Iowa Press, 382 pages, $15.95) is an expansion of the themes of that article. From 1895, when Professor Thomas Macbride first expressed his vision of public parks, to 1986 when the Iowa Conservation Commission merged with others to become the DNR, Conard's book captures the themes, events and personalities that shaped Iowa's park and conservation movement for more than 90 years.

This book is much more than a historical documentary. It is a window to the past that easily opens through the author's skill and passion for her subject. The reader not only experiences the events but comes to know, in a personal way, the major characters who provided leadership in early conservation efforts. It enables the reader to understand and appreciate conservation issues over the past century and their particular relevance to today's challenges.

The author's exhaustive research of the personal papers of major characters and thousands of pages of official minutes of the Conservation Commission is blended into a story that informs and entertains. It leaves the reader feeling gratitude to the men and women who succeeded and failed, but most importantly, tried to establish Iowa as a conservation leader in the 20th century.

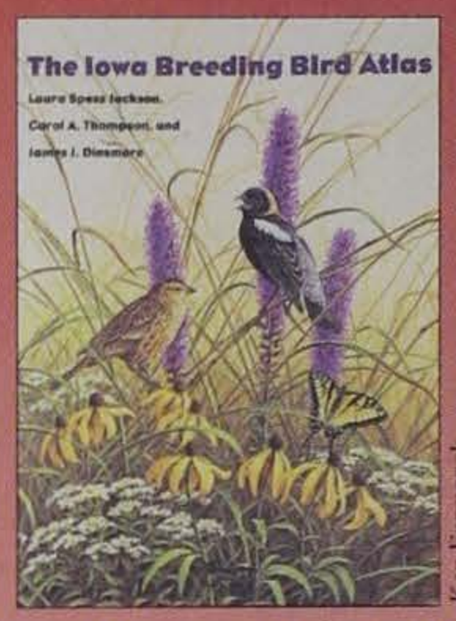
Returning from that vacation and deboarding the plane back in Iowa, I thought of the place in history that today's conservation leaders will establish for ourselves. In 75 years, will we earn a chapter or a short footnote? Dr. Conard's book causes us to reflect, look forward and think strategically about parks and their future. Historians have a special place in the world. They not only teach us about the past, they guide us to the future. Conard is a great historian and *Places of Quiet Beauty* is a great guide. A solid writing style that holds the reader's attention from beginning to end is icing on the cake.

--Michael Carrier, Parks, Recreation and Preserves Division Administrator

Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas

Whether you are a casual bird-watcher or a college science professor, you now have a heavyweight friend on the bookshelf.

The nearly 500-page *Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas* pulls together almost 15,000 hours of observations of 162 different Iowa breeding birds. With color photos, maps, species histories and descriptions, the atlas provides a comprehensive picture of bird distribution in Iowa.



Ken Formanek

"We are in an era of tremendous interest in the future of birds," observes Dr. James Dinsmore, an animal ecology professor at Iowa State University and co-author of the book. "The neotropical migrants, the threats to their breeding grounds and wintering areas -- this book now gives us a benchmark for the future."

Dinsmore sees the atlas as invaluable to science teachers, yet "user-friendly" for casual bird-watchers. "There is clearly a scientific base," he says. "For the hard-core ecologist there is good data about where the various species can be found. At the same time, it is very readable. If you want to know about the breeding habits of robins, for instance, this will show you when and where they nest. You can learn how many eggs they hatch and how the young are raised."

Depending on your preference, birds can be tracked by county, by landform, by habitat or by farming practice.

The *Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas* provides a late 20th century glimpse of habitat and an often limited distribution of many birds species. It also shows how human activity jeopardizes the future of some of those same species. Dinsmore suggests that the greatest value of the atlas will come in 25 to 50 years, when changes are measured.

The *Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas* is published by the University of Iowa Press and is available at book stores nationwide for $47.95 hardbound; $24.95 paperback.

--Joe Wilkinson, DNR information specialist

Trees For Kids Enters Seventh Year

Take a good look at your local community schools, have you noticed the color green is becoming more common? Or perhaps your kids or even your grandchildren are quizzing you on what Iowa's State Tree is? (The answer is the oak.) This interest in helping Iowa schools become "green" again, may be attributed to a unique seven-year-old Iowa program called *Trees For Kids* and *Trees for Teens*.

Trees for Kids (*TFK*) and *Trees For Teens* (*TFT*) are educational, tree planting programs for public and private elementary and secondary schools in Iowa. This program produces and distributes free teaching materials on trees and forests for Iowa teachers. In addition, through a unique partnership with private industries and associations, teachers can receive a free tree to plant with their class during Earth/Arbor Week at the end of April (April 20-27, 1997).

In 1996, *TFK* and *TFT* worked with more than 4,200 teachers and 300,000 students. Teachers and their students work with local nursery operators, bankers and volunteer leaders to get a tree and plant it, when ground and weather conditions permit. Even in the rain, students and teachers find *TFK* fun and educational. They also make a major impact on our landscape. In 1996, more than 65,400 trees were planted on public areas across the state.

"We are behind *Trees For Kids* because it is a good program," says Ron Herndon of Des Moines Seed and Nursery. "If kids become interested in tree planting now, they will most likely continue to be interested as they grow older."

"We support *Trees For Kids* because we feel kids are Iowa's most important resource and we want local kids to learn how important trees are and how much fun it is to plant them," says Sherry Jorgensen, vice president of First Bank and Trust in Spirit Lake.

TFK and *TFT* are made possible through funding and support from the DNR's Forestry Division, Iowa Nursery and Landscape Association, Iowa Bankers Association, MidAmerican Energy, Peoples Natural Gas, Iowa Wood Industries Association, Trees Forever and Iowa State University Extension Forestry.

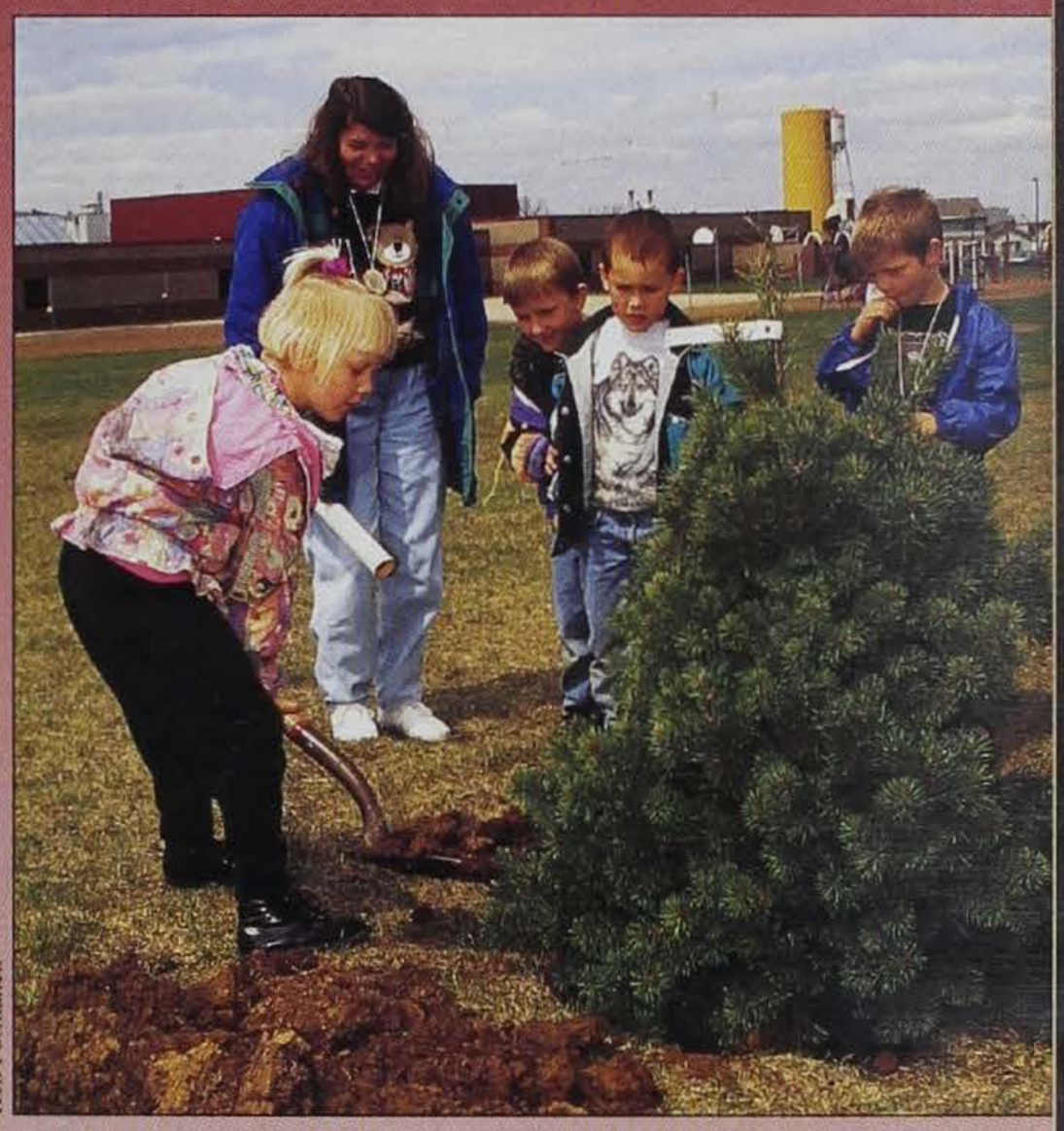
Free *TFK* and *TFT* teacher packets are designed and distributed by the DNR with the assistance of an active committee of *TFK* partners. Major funding for production and distribution of the teacher and student educational materials is being provided by MidAmerican Energy and Peoples Natural Gas as part of their energy efficiency programs and a REAP Conservation Education grant.

In addition, this year's *TFK/TFT* poster, "*A Year in the Life of an Iowa Oak,*" an original four-color artwork, was provided by two Iowa State University bio-medical illustration students, Mike Gipple and Jason Witte.

Chris Fennesy, project manager with MidAmerican Energy in Davenport, says, "*Trees For Kids* is an excellent opportunity for MidAmerican Energy to teach students and teachers the values of shade trees for conserving energy through proper selection and placement. MidAmerican Energy is committed to leading efforts to improve the environment of the communities we serve and we see our involvement in *Trees For Kids and Teens* as a part of that commitment."

Perhaps the best measure of the success of *Trees For Kids* is what the teachers and kids are saying. "Thanks for helping us to plant a tree, we have a cool playground now," says, Wesley, a fourth-grader at Emerson Elementary School in Des Moines. According to Joyce Steffenson a third-grade teacher at Waterville Elementary School "On April 22, 1996 our entire student population of 151 students took part in transplanting nine existing pines and planting 19 new trees on our playground. We began at 8 a.m. and finished after 3 p.m. with the help of volunteers, staff and Riveland Nursery. It was a great day for all of us."

For more information on *Trees For Kids* or *Trees For Teens* contact either Liza Lenz, *Trees For Kids* intern at (515)281-4915, or John Walkowiak, DNR urban forester at (515)242-5966 or write to *Trees For Kids*, DNR, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034.



Ken Formanek

■ **This elementary class is working on the Dallas Center-Grimes *Trees For Kids* windbreak.**

Conservation Update

Iowa's Eurasian Watermilfoil Program

Reports about "alien sightings" began filtering out of Minnesota in the late 1980s. However, these "aliens," while little and green, were not visitors from another planet. The sightings concerned an aquatic plant showing up in lakes in the Twin Cities area. The initial response to these reports was one of guarded optimism. Sometimes it is the case with exotic species that original fears never fully materialize. This was not to be the case however, with this new arrival. Within several years, the plant had rapidly spread to many of the lakes in the metropolitan area. Even more bothersome was the fact that it had begun to spread to areas outside of the Twin Cities. As the number of reports of new infestations continued to increase, concern began to grow in Iowa.

The focus of this concern was Eurasian watermilfoil, an exotic aquatic weed native to Europe and Asia. Since its arrival in the United States almost fifty years ago in waters of the Chesapeake Bay area, the plant has moved steadily westward and is now found in forty states and three Canadian provinces. It presently exists in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois and Missouri and is also common in the Mississippi River including the portion bordering Iowa. Eurasian watermilfoil was first discovered in Iowa in 1993 in Crystal Lake in Hancock County.

After introduction into waterbodies, Eurasian watermilfoil typically establishes dense stands which by mid-summer reach the surface of the water and create heavy mats of vegetation. These mats severely restrict boating, water-skiing, sailing, fishing and other forms of aquatic recreation. Eurasian watermilfoil also displaces native aquatic vegetation, thereby reducing species diversity and the ecological stability of a body of water. While Eurasian watermilfoil may provide good fish habitat in certain instances, its dense growth habits generally have a negative impact on fisheries.

As word spread about Eurasian watermilfoil, worry began to spread among Iowans. This was especially true in northwest Iowa where lakeshore homeowners and members of the local lake protective associations began to questions what could be done to protect the Iowa Great Lakes.

What started out as a general concern about this potential problem became a focused effort to take action. In 1996, legislation was passed making it illegal to transport Eurasian watermilfoil on a public road, place a trailer or launch a watercraft with Eurasian watermilfoil attached in public waters or operate a watercraft in a marked Eurasian watermilfoil area. Violators are fined a $100 penalty.

The law requires the DNR to identify bodies of water with infestations and post signs alerting boaters. According to the law, the DNR may prohibit boating, fishing, swimming and trapping in infested bodies of water.

The legislation also requires the DNR to prpare a long-term statewide Euasian watermilfoil plan. Consequently, on July 1, 1996 the Iowa Eurasian Watermilfoil Program began. Since then, a number of activities and projects have been implemented in three primary areas -- public awareness and education, boat access monitoring and aquatic vegetation monitoring.

Public awareness and educational activities have included presentations to lake associations and civic groups, signage of boat ramps in the northwest Iowa, development and distribution of information brochures, billboards to be displayed throughout the state during the 1997 boating season and preparation of numerous press releases and news articles.

A total of 340 hours resulted in the inspection of 3,206 boats and 7,835 personal contacts with boaters in 1996. Boat accesses were monitored between the Fourth of July and Labor Day weekends in the Iowa Great Lakes area as well as at Clear Lake, Storm Lake and Lost Island Lake. During that time, three boats were found to be infected with Eurasian watermilfoil. These included a Wisconsin sailboat inspected at Clear Lake, an Iowa boat inspected at West Okoboji Lake and a wave runner inspected at Storm Lake. Both Iowa watercraft had been used on infested lakes in Minnesota.

Between July 1 and Oct. 31, last year, 91 lakes were surveyed for Eur-

DNR

■ A total of 340 hours of watercraft monitoring resulted in the inspection of 3,206 boats for Eurasian watermilfoil and 7,835 personal contacts with boaters.

Conservation Update

Lowell Washburn

■ Eurasian watermilfoil displaces native aquatic vegetation, thereby reducing species diversity and the ecological stability of a body of water.

asian watermilfoil. Species lists of existing aquatic vegetation were prepared which will serve as baseline data for future monitoring activities. During these monitoring activities, Eurasian watermilfoil was discovered in Snyder Bend Lake in Woodbury County.

Herbicide application equipment to treat new infestations has been purchased, a priority ranking system for Iowa lakes has been completed and a comprehensive management plan has been prepared. Future activities include posting more signs, developing an informational slide program for the public and preparing reference manuals for individuals interested in this exotic species.

While these activities represent a starting point, much remains to be done. Results of boat access and aquatic vegetation monitoring during last year's boating season suggests Eurasian watermilfoil will continue to be a problem in Iowa. Only through the cooperation of all Iowa boaters and anglers can the DNR effectively manage and control the spread of Eurasian watermilfoil.

(See this issue's *Practical Conservationist* on pages 53 and 54 for tips on how to prevent the spread of Euasian watermilfoil.)

-- Gary Phillips, Iowa Lakes Community College

DNR To Construct Rock Riffles

Each year, anglers make more than two million trips to fish Iowa's interior rivers and streams. However, portions of many streams lack good fish habitat and offer little or no opportunity for fishing. To enhance fish habitat and increase angling opportunities, the DNR is proposing to construct rock riffles at 96 locations in 19 streams with areas of poor fish habitat.

Riffles are constructed with large rock reaching across the width of the stream so that a deep pool is created just below the riffle. The riffles are generally placed in habitat-poor areas on public land. The deep-pool habitat is highly preferred by walleye, smallmouth bass, and channel and flathead catfish, and when these fish concentrate in the pools, anglers enjoy excellent fishing success.

Funding for riffle construction comes from fishing license revenue and the federal Sport Fish Restoration program.

A list of all proposed riffle locations is available for review, and public comments are welcome. For more information on the riffle projects, contact Martin Konrad, DNR Riffle Project, Wallace State Office Bldg., Des Moines, IA 50319 (515) 281-6976.

Upcoming NRC, EPC and Preserves Board Meetings

The dates and locations have been set for the following meetings of the Natural Resource Commission, Environmental Protection Commission and the Preserves Advisory Board of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Agendas for these meetings are set approximately 10 days prior to the scheduled date of the meeting.

For additional information, contact the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034.

Natural Resource Commission:

--March 13, Des Moines
--April, no meeting
--May 8, Muscatine
--June 19, Strawberry Point

Environmental Protection Commission:

--March 17, to be announced
--April 21, Des Moines
--May 19, Des Moines
--June 16, Des Moines

State Preserves Advisory Board:

--March 11, Mahaska County

Warden's Diary

"Just Trying to Be Friendly"

Some days it just doesn't pay. You *know* what I mean. "No good deed goes unpunished," as one of my fellow officers is fond of saying. One week last summer it felt like I proved this maxim over and over.

The week began when I spotted six anglers spread out along a bank on the Iowa River. The first two I checked didn't have licenses. I issued each a ticket, and each person took it without complaining. "Sorry," one said. "We knew we needed licenses. We just didn't get them." They were pleasant people. They were truthful, too -- no excuses.

"No need to apologize," I answered. "I understand, you simply made a mistake, but it's part of my job to check these."

"What a nice day," I thought as I approached the next fisherman. "Good aftern . . .," was all he let me get out.

"YEAH, I KNOW WHO YOU ARE. YOU'RE THE GAME WARDEN. YOU WANT TO SEE MY LICENSE!" he yelled, and reached for his wallet. "HERE, YOU FIND IT, YOU GET PAID TO," he screamed as he threw the contens of his wallet at me.

A cloud began to form over my day. I took one deep breath and then another. I picked up his license, looked at it, and handed it back to him with the biggest smile I could muster. "Thank you very much, sir," I said as I smiled. I started to walk on, leaving him to pick up his items.

"HEY!" he yelled. "DON'T YOU NEED THE NUMBER OFF IT? How do they know if you've checked anyone, if you don't write the number down?"

"I send a biweekly report on what I've done," I informed him.

"And they believe you?" he taunted. He grumbled and turned to the river. I walked on. Ah people, you've gotta love 'em.

Well, a couple of days later I was assigned to cruise Clear Lake, checking anglers with the new officer I was training.

We first saw a man, a woman and a couple of kids on a dock. A pole was propped off the end of the dock, and the woman was sitting with a fishing pole. The kids, being kids, were here, there and all points in between. We motored up, and I asked the woman for a license.

"I don't have one," she informed me.

Looking at the man, I asked, "Are you fishing, sir? Do you have a license?"

"I'm not fishing," he answered.

Not having seen him operate a fishing pole, I returned to the woman, and told her I would have to give her a ticket for not having a license. I asked her for her driver's license, and she told me it was in the house, and she would go get it.

"That's not necessary," I said pleasantly. "I'm sure you're not going to lie to me about that."

Suddenly the man jumped in. "WHAT? That's a terrible thing to say!" he bellowed. "These guys are accusing us of being liars!" he yelled at the confused couple who were fishing nearby. "Go get your license," he screamed at the woman. "We'll prove to them who you are!"

I looked at the officer I was training. We shook our heads. You couldn't even compliment someone on appearing honest. Oh well. I started filling out the ticket. One of the children sat down on the edge of the dock and started talking to my partner.

"Don't do that!" the man growled to the child. "They'll take you away to jail."

"Oh no, we wouldn't do that," I said.

"Yeah, that'd be their big arrest for the day," the man jeered. (Yes, there's nothing like civility to teach kids respect for police officers.)

I love brand new officers -- so eager, so fresh, so . . . inquisitive.

"Have you caught any fish?" the trainee innocently inquired.

"No," the woman answered.

"Oh yes," the child interjected. (Don't you love kids?)

"What kind did you catch?" my partner asked.

"A walleye," the little one beamed. (What a sweet child!)

"Above the 13-inch limit," the woman quickly interjected.

"The length limit is 14," my trainee said. Hmm. Funny how that conversation suddenly stopped, although the man inserted, "I'm going to call the Director. Why don't you go catch those jet skiers?"

I wrote down my name and address, and handed them to the woman with the ticket.

"Here, this is my name and address, and the phone number of my supervisor. If you wish to complain contact him first. Please accept my apologies if I've offended you. That was not my intention," I told her.

"Well you shouldn't have said *that* in front of the children," she admonished.

"Yeah, they learned *a lot* today," I thought, as we motored away.

"How do you put up with that behavior?" my new partner asked.

I explained how it appears some people have to poke at law enforcement officers in order to magnify their own egos. Some just like to argue and others, well, who knows their reasons. You just try to ignore it and think of those kind of folks as the exceptions.

I knew an officer who had one of those "smiley faces" on the inside of his ticket book.

"What's that for?" I once asked.

"It's to remind me the person I'm dealing with now is not like the last person I dealt with!" he answered.

Shortly after our discussion on the "whys of omeriness" we checked a boat of Minesoata anglers. My trainee asked to see the walleye in the Minnesotans' live well. After stretching, sitting on and darned near flattening the fish, they barely (by a hair's breadth) made the 14-inch minimum length limit. We warned them, and they thanked us profusely for the warning and no ticket.

"See, not everyone is disagreeable," I assured myself. "What nice people. It's a pleasure to have them in our state," I beamed to the trainee.

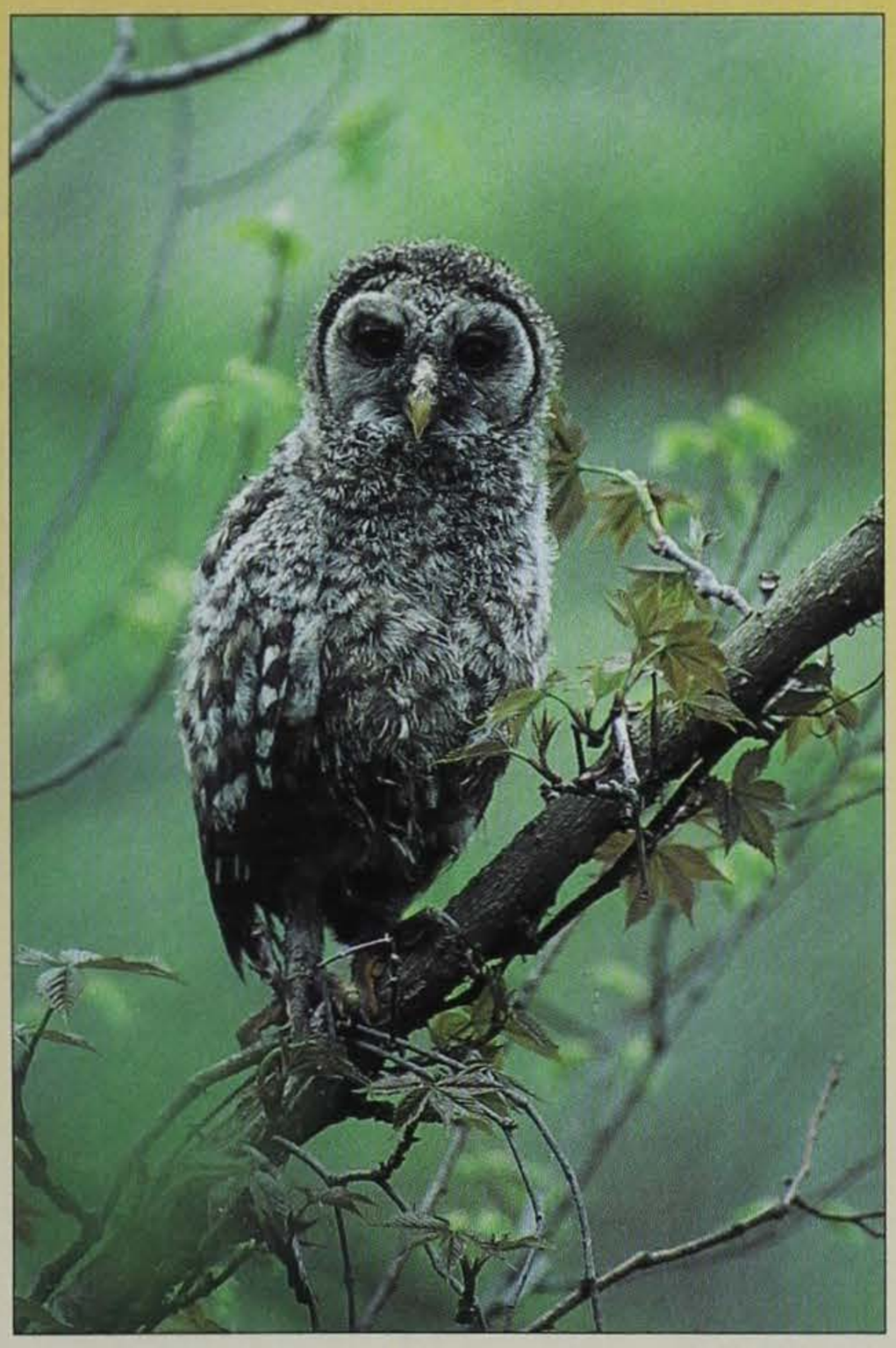
On Monday however, my supervisor called me. "Here it comes," I thought.

"Hey," he said, "This guy from Minnesota has been complaining you ran into their boat!"

See? No good deed . . . Where's the "smiley face" sticker when you need it? I've got a few places I *have* to post one.

-- by Chuck Humeston

Parting Glance



Roger A. Hill

"Whoooo's wise?
You are, when you plant a tree."

See the 1997 Seedling Order Form on pages 48-49.